Week ending Jan. 16 1960

JOHN BULL

Everybody's Weekly

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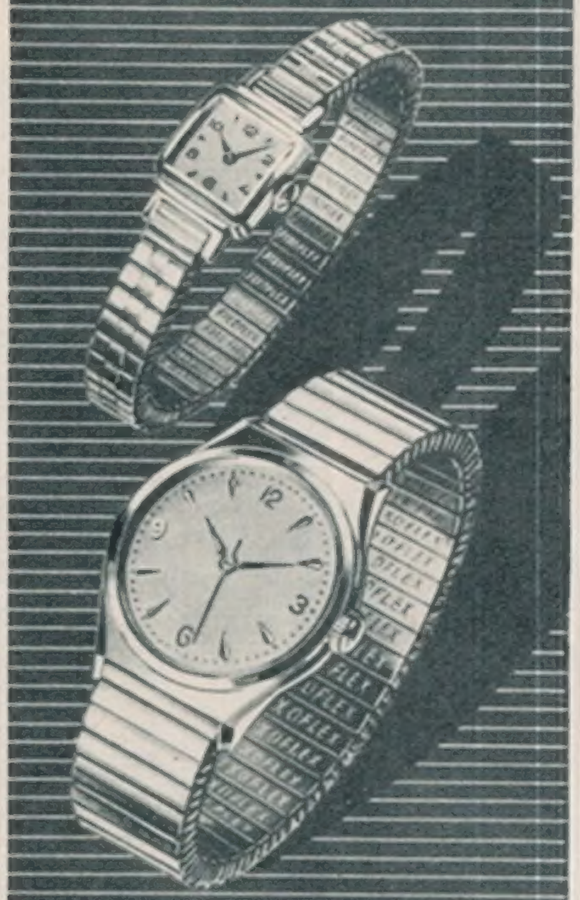

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The Cover

THIS is a time when loyalties show distinct signs of dividing. Puzzle: find the holiday, from the glossy world at their fingertips, to please both of these people for most of the time. She sees a glorious idleness as the fitting climax to a year of bustle about the house. And who can blame her? Least of all her office-bound husband, even now rarin' to go on a sportin' jaunt. "A sense of adventure leads to strange places," says Coleman. "Often to the same place as last year"

Free Speech

JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

Girls Without Shocks

IT would make a big contribution towards lessening home accidents if all girls at school had a course on simple electric engineering.

Women have far more to do with the growing number of electric appliances in the home than do men, yet few of them understand how lethal electricity is if misused.

My electrician tells me that he grows more amazed each day at the risks wives run. "They will shove a loose connection or wire into any likely looking spot without regard to consequences," he says, "rather than be held up until their husbands come home."

If we cannot cure this impetuous rashness, at least we could make broad principles less of a mystery so that the golden rules of safety will mean something to every woman. —E. HUMPHREYS, Weston Street, Nechells, Birmingham, 7.

Bus Stop Gimmicks

Bus companies in Britain have been having a thin time recently, but isn't that partly because they have not moved with the times to attract more travellers?

In America, for instance, I believe it is possible to buy newspapers on the buses, while in some states it is possible to arrange for the bus to pick you up at your own front door.

Innovations such as these may be in the gimmick class, but if they attract passengers and extra revenue they are serving their purpose.—PHILIP ROGERS, Sefton Street, Southport, Lancs.

"Americans use buses much more for long journeys than we do," says a travel expert. "Many people cannot afford rail travel in the States—and therefore many of the amenities offered should be compared with our railways. As for calling at separate houses . . . the authorities would not allow it here."

Our School On Tape

A reader says tape-recorders should be used for speech-training in schools ("Free Speech," December 12). I teach at a junior boys' school where a tape-recorder is used for speech defects, clarity and fluency; to record reading progress among backward pupils, a broadcast by the upper school, choir-practice and plays.

It is also used for taping radio broadcasts for use at more convenient times. It's a boon to pupil and teacher.—MRS. MARIE ANDERSON, Dartmouth Park Avenue, London, N.W.5.

Half-day Double

Is there any reason why towns should not be divided into two parts, one half to close on Wednesday afternoons, the other on Thursday afternoons?

Besides the convenience to the general public, shop people would be able to do their own shopping at leisure.—MRS. VIOLET DANE, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

Adults On Trial

Recent JOHN BULL articles about teenagers set me thinking that so-called savage communities have a much better method of dealing with this problem than we have. Among American Indian tribes early adolescence was taken up with arduous preparations for severe tests which

had to be passed before being admitted into full membership of the tribe.

Their high spirits were put to the fullest possible use attaining a goal —the man who failed to pass ranked very low in the social scale.

A pity we haven't some sort of "M-test" so that every person had to measure up to a certain standard of citizenship before being judged worthy of the vote.—MRS. A. ROBERTS, Linden Avenue, Ramsbottom, Lancs.

A Man's Artifice

Women think nothing of creating a new complexion with face powder and lipstick, dyeing their hair, wearing false eyelashes, padding their busts and artificially slimming waists and hips.

Yet, if a man grows a beard, by doing nothing more unnatural than stopping shaving, women nearly always say it has been done to hide a weak chin.

Why this jealousy? Is it because women think of disguise as their territory and resent a man trespassing on it?—PETER F. RAY, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middx.

Praise Or Be Damned?

"Never let them know how good they are," is advice given to me by more than one business man, referring to the better members of their staffs. Surely this is bad psychology? A little praise will renew my energy and inspire me to greater efforts. Yet these men are convinced they are right not to give praise and appreciation.—MRS. NANCY DAVIES, Rush Hill, Bath.

Drop In Status

A scientist colleague resigned from his original work in industry to take a teaching post. He did so at a financial loss, but believed he was giving more valuable service to the community.

Having settled down now, he is happy teaching higher maths and physics. He finds, however, that as a teacher he is not so highly regarded socially as he was as a scientist.

He is sure that it has nothing to do with the money he earns and we both wonder why people make this distinction.—F. J. VERRIER, Gladesmore Road, London, N.15.

Suitable For Infants

As Budget time draws near we will again hear the cries for a reduction in the entertainment tax charged on cinema seats to boost declining box office receipts.

One idea which cinema managers might consider is a room where parents can leave small children.

Many people would pay a small fee for the knowledge that their children are in the charge of a suitably qualified nurse. My wife and I would enjoy the luxury of a Saturday afternoon at the pictures if we didn't have to inconvenience our neighbours to act as baby sitters.—THOMAS W. LITTLE, Runfold, Surrey.

"While we think that this might sell more cinema tickets, it has obvious difficulties for cinema managers," says a spokesman of a cinema chain.

"No matter how careful the precautions, something could happen to a child—and we would be responsible. Frankly we don't feel confident about taking over the guardianship of children.

"There was talk in the trade of installing sound-proof balconies for people with youngsters, but so far nobody has considered it a commercial proposition."

Fox In My Life

I wish my vixen would read Robert Holles's article (JOHN BULL, November 21) which says that foxes are reluctant to dig, and are not by nature nocturnal. She digs a lot, by night, although she does prefer a light on her work.

This has become difficult since she bit off the light switch. Now she has to jump a dozen times to switch on the light.

Downstairs she has overcome her fear of fire-irons, but will not pass a bicycle. She has no body odour, but

when she is startled a rosette of dark hairs opens near the root of her tail, giving off what I understand is called scent.

Like a cat, she is affectionate on her own terms; her greatest pleasure is a rough house with the dog and puppies. She gets in a few crafty nips without umbrage being taken. The door is generally open, but she has no intention of braving the outside world.—MISS E. D. OVEREND, Alexandra Road, Frome, Somerset.

Counter Grumbles

Living at home in England I heard people constantly grumbling about British-made goods . . . shoddily made, poor design, etc.

Well, here I live in a shopper's paradise where the shops are full of goods from all over the world.

One can buy anything from a pin to an elephant. It's lovely having such a wide choice—but for value for money and sheer quality British goods stand out a mile.

You grumblers at home are really buying the best.—MRS. MARY NEWELL, Cairnhill Circle, Singapore.

The men had arranged it neatly. Honour would be satisfied and nobody would be hurt. And then a woman had to meddle

PISTOLS FOR TWO

by CLIVE BURNLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

THE challenge had been given and accepted; the seconds had carried out the formalities; it now seemed inevitable that Michael Barlow and Thomas Swann should fight each other with lethal weapons at eight o'clock on the morning of October the thirtieth, in the year 1820, on Corsenden Common.

Judith Heppelscott thought otherwise.

If she had not been so well bred, Judith might have been called a strapping wench—tall, flax-haired, with eyes of forget-me-not blue. She was to marry Michael; a dull match for scandal, both parties being so equal in wealth and rank and personal charm that there was absolutely nothing the gossips could begin to get their teeth into.

As soon as word reached her of the impending duel, Judith called for a carriage and went rattling six miles from her father's house at Askew Hall to Braythorn Place where Michael lived. She was accompanied, of course, by her woman Dunn.

They had barely passed the lodge gates when they met Michael and a groom riding in the opposite direction. Michael, recent inheritor of family estates, was a lean young man admirably adapted for hanging fashionable clothes upon, resilient, at this and most other moments, in tread and temper alike.

The moment called for confidential discussion; the woman Dunn was left in the carriage and the groom made shift to hold all three horses while the betrothed pair strolled under the chestnuts that lined the drive.

"This duel they talk about," said Judith. "I forbid it."

"My dearest Judith," answered Michael, "it's extremely kind of you to show so much concern for me. But. . . ."

"But nothing," she said firmly. "You are not going to fight Tom Swann."

"I must," he said. "It's difficult for women to understand, I know. You don't realize how utterly impossible it is for a gentleman who values his reputation to decline a challenge. The field of honour is. . . ."

"The field of fiddlesticks!" cried Judith. "Honour, indeed! Ten days ago Tom Swann was your closest friend. And then you drink too much wine together one night, and get hoity-toity with it, and rush off and arrange to murder each other! Where's the honour in that?"

"But Judith. . . ."

"And they even dare to tell me," she said indignantly, "that you quarrelled over Lady Parsley."

"So we did, in a way. But Judith. . . ."

"I'm not going to be made a widow even before I'm married. And everybody knows that Lady Parsley. . . ."

"Never mind her. And it's quite likely I won't even get scratched. After all. . . ."

"Well, I won't have Tom murdered either. He's a very amusing young man."

"I'll try not to hurt him too much. But you must realize I couldn't possibly. . . ."

JUDITH said firmly, "Michael Barlow, if you fight this duel, I shall utterly refuse to marry you. Do you hear? I will *not*!"

Michael studied her expression long enough to assure himself that she meant it, and sighed. He said: "I can see I'll have to tell you everything. But move a little farther this way. I won't talk in earshot of that domestic familiar of yours. When you can't spare a carriage, I'm sure Dunn uses a broomstick."

"I won't have a word said against Dunn, either," said Judith. "She may be plain, but she's loyal and honest."

"Dunn isn't plain. She's a very pretty girl."

"How can you say that? Why, her nose. . . ."

"It doesn't matter whether she's plain or pretty," Michael said. "What I don't like is that she's too damnably clever. A clever servant is a frightening thing; one wonders in the end who is the servant and who the master. I remember once I had a man called Jarvis. . . ."

"Don't try to change the subject," Judith said firmly. "We were talking of this absurd duel with Tom."

"Oh, yes," Michael hesitated. "Well, my dearest Judith, it's all perfectly simple and you are not to worry about it. I swear to you that nobody will be hurt."

"I don't see how you can possibly say that. Only last week Captain Tilley was shot right through the wind-pipe on Wimbledon Common. I met him once at the Duxburys. He. . . ."

"But this duel with Tom is different," said Michael. "If you promise secrecy, I'll tell you why."

"Go on."

"Well, you know what Tom's like. Charming fellow, gay, elegant, comes from one of the best families there are. The only thing wrong with him is—he doesn't have any money, poor fellow. It's an infernal shame. I know he does himself fairly well on mine, but. . . ."

"But you can't fight a man just because he borrows money!"

"No, dear heart, of course not. But you see, Tom has very nearly settled all his money troubles. In quite a pleasant way, too, if you overlook rather thick wrists and the little wart just above. . . ."

"What *are* you talking about?"

"Why, Lady Parsley, of course. She's a very fine widow, worth every penny of two thousand a year. She's only six years older than Tom, or that's what I believe. And if he makes the match. . . ."

"But what's this to do with fighting a duel?"

"Everything. You see Tom isn't *quite* sure of her ladyship. For one thing he has rivals—three of them. Of course none could hold a candle to

The woman was in great distress. She flung herself at the major, sobbing. "Eliza!" he said, startled, "What's the meaning of this?"

Pistols for two

continued from previous page

Tom, except that the others *do* happen to be rich. One's actually in trade, of all things; another is a peer and a poet; and the third's old Barstoke himself—yes, truly; and you know what he's like."

"I don't see what all this has to do with. . . ."

"Well, it has. We're supposed to have quarrelled, Tom and I, because of something I'm supposed to have said about Lady Parsley. You know nothing appeals to faded middle-aged ladies quite so much as being fought over."

"Yes, but. . . ."

"And that isn't all. Think of Tom's rivals—rich, round, comfortable fellows. They're not fighting men. And once let word get round that Tom *fights*; let it be known that a word out of place to him means being called out to pace off the mark at dawn—let that spread, and they'll scurry back to their counting houses like rabbits to a warren." Michael looked at Judith appealingly. "Let Tom fight a duel and the lady's his? And her money!"

"But neither will be any use to him if you hit him in the wind-pipe."

"But I won't, dear Judith. We've arranged that. We practised for a fortnight, in deadly secret. It's perfectly easy to stand out there and blaze away and miss by yards without making it in the least obvious."

"But surely if nobody's hurt. . . ."

Michael laughed. "Half the duels that are fought never cause a scratch. If you stand out there like a man and don't flinch and take your opponent's fire three times—well, you're a damned fine fellow. Our reputations will be made—we'll be fighting men! The lady will fall into Tom's arms and he'll never need to ask me for a penny I might want to spend on my beautiful wife."

"That's all very well," said Judith. "But the fact is that it only makes the whole idea even more ridiculous. Whatever Tom wants even to think of Bessie Parsley for, I can't imagine."

"Well, that's Tom's affair," said Michael. "But I swear there isn't the slightest danger; none at all."

He was, of course, quite wrong. At that moment a second vehicle came up the drive and stopped beside the one in which the woman Dunn waited. From it there descended a stiff, broad-shouldered cavalry-legged man wearing a cape, his over-ruddy face set in a regimentally stern expression. He walked across to Michael and apologized for his intrusion in the most formal tones.

"Major Fenning!" said Michael. "One of Mr. Swann's seconds, I believe? But are not the arrangements complete?"

"I fear not, Mr. Barlow," Major Fenning said stiffly. "My principal, Mr. Swann, has sustained a most unfortunate accident in the hunting field, as a result of which he has temporarily lost the use of his right arm. It will therefore not be possible for him to meet you in three day's time, as arranged. I am instructed to convey to you his regrets and to assure you that he will meet you the instant he has recovered."

"Tom!" cried Judith. "Is he badly hurt?"

"Not seriously, ma'am," answered the major. "A dislocated wrist."

It was now that Michael made his great mistake. Judith's solicitude for his opponent might make the major suspect the truth: that the duel was a fraud. Therefore, Michael reasoned, he must counter it with truculence.

He sneered. "A most convenient accident—for Mr. Swann."

The major's eyes grew hard. "What do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean, sir," said Michael, holding his head back and looking down his nose, "that, as soon as one challenges people, they have hunting accidents or fall sick of a fever."

"Sir," said the major, "do I understand that you have the effrontery to call me a liar and my principal a coward?"

Michael saw at once that he had gone too far, but the major would not listen.

"Mr. Barlow, I consider your observations dishonourable. And since you appear to be so disappointed at losing the opportunity of fighting, I shall be happy to accommodate you myself." He turned to Judith. "You will pardon me, ma'am, but this is necessary. I am ready to give you provocation, Mr. Barlow."

He slapped Michael across the face with his glove, not very lightly.

"My seconds shall wait upon you, sir," said the major. "They will no doubt find it convenient to suggest that we keep the hour already appointed."

And he turned back to his carriage.

"Damn you!" cried Michael after him. "What did you do that for?"

Judith pulled him back by the arm. "Don't you dare apologize!"

"But, dear heart!" protested Michael. "I don't want to fight *him*. He doesn't know—I mean, with him it'll be a *real* duel. He'll very likely kill me."

The major had driven away.

"But you must have *some* pride," Judith said. "He hit you right across the face. You can not overlook that."

"I could," said Michael. "Certainly I could. Because he slaps me across the face isn't any reason why I should let him shoot me through the windpipe. In any case, didn't you forbid me to fight duels?"

"Oh, with Tom it was different," Judith answered. "But if a man comes up and hits you right across the face, what *can* you do? If you did nothing, you'd be a laughing stock—and I couldn't marry a laughing stock."

Michael said miserably: "If I die, my blood will be on your conscience."

"Oh, don't be so tiresome, please," Judith said. "Of course if there *were* some way for you to avoid actually fighting without entirely losing your honour."

"Isn't there?"

"No—at least. . . . I know," she added brightly, "let's ask Dunn."

Amy Dunn had an air of being permanently pensive. She sat quietly in the carriage while Judith and Michael explained what the situation was. When they finished, she gave her judgment.

"Well, Miss Judith, Mr. Barlow can't very well go to see Mr. Swann. But couldn't *you* go? Ask him to see Major Fenning and insist on fighting first."

"Of course!" said Judith. "It's just what I was going to suggest myself. I'll go and see Tom tomorrow."

"By the way, sir," Dunn asked Michael, "it isn't a Major Fenning from Bristol, is it?"

"Not Bristol," said Michael "This Major Fenning lives in Calamine Street. Quite a fashionable area, I believe."

"It used to be," said Judith, "once."

"Dunn," said Michael, "you're a clever girl."

"She isn't really," said Judith, a little frostily. "She can't count very well and she writes a most peculiar hand."

Amy Dunn said demurely: "Thank you, sir. If I can think of anything else that might help—well, I'll do it."

Her air of remoteness left her for a second and she lifted her eyelashes high enough to give him a cordial glance.

Michael stood looking after the carriage when it drove away; that was a concession, to get that much notice from Dunn. He vaulted into the saddle of the horse the groom still held for him.

"Those women have my life in their keeping, Billings."

The groom shook his head. "The you're as good as pork, sir," he said

And it did seem in the succeedin days—the few that were to elapse before the appointed time—that Michael Barlow's trust had been misplaced. He received no words, from either Judith Heppelscott or Amy Dunn. Inquiries at Askew Hall elicited the information that Judith, accompanied by the tame aunt she kept for such expeditions, had gone into Hertfordshire in the general direction of Tom Swann's ancestral home; while Amy Dunn had obtained a few days' leave of absence and had gone to London to see a sick relative.

Major Fenning's seconds, all highly military types, paid their unsmiling calls on Michael and confirmed that all arrangements had been made for eight o'clock on the thirtieth on Corsenden Common. Michael's valet asked if he could please be given a reference now, just in case. A rather grubby young man called to sell Michael a bullet-proof vest. The family lawyer called.

On the morning of the day before the duel, Michael was a desperate young man. Even Dunn had failed.

He toyed with the idea of fleeing the country; of feigning fever; of simply pretending to have forgotten the whole business. He went for a wild ride, trusting that he would break a collar bone at least. But he emerged unscathed.

Then, about midday that day, he found that he did, in fact, have his pride. No ignoble means of escape could be available to him. He had to go through with it. When he realized this, his mind was easier. He gave the valet his reference; he set his affairs in order.

But he slept little that night and greeted the new day hollow-cheeked and hollow-eyed, but resolute.

His seconds came for him, calm and businesslike; of course they were—what had they to fear? And then, so very soon, he was standing on the tussocky grass of Corsenden Common.

What a price to pay for honour!

But where was Major Fenning? It was unpardonable to be late for a duel.

A frantic and morale-weakening hope began to rise in Michael's breast; by some miraculous intervention his opponent had been prevented from appearing—some delightful accident of broken neck or bubonic plague. A half-hour more and he could shrug his shoulders and go home, his honour and his windpipe both intact.

But there at last was the dark carriage pulling on to the grass, with its two sleek and sable horses so like those favoured by undertakers; and from it three brisk, dark figures were emerging: Major Fenning, perhaps not quite so cool as one would have expected of a soldier whose duty it is to face fire; and his sombre, cloaked seconds.

For Michael there now only remained the thin hope that he might perhaps lose a limb only, and not his life. But now it was inevitable, he wished the thing to be done as soon as possible.

"Let's get it over," he said.

"By all means," agreed one of the major's seconds. "First let us agree on weapons. We have four cases of pistols. Mr. Barlow, will you choose?"

"Oh, it's all one. Any pair you like."

Major Fenning frowned. He took a vast time examining the eight pistols, feeling them all in his hand, snapping triggers, peering along barrels.

"For Heaven's sake!" Michael snapped. "Are we to be here all day?"

But it did appear that the major had at last made his selection. He chose two French pistols with elaborately engraved butts and handed them to the seconds for loading. This operation, meticulously carried out, took more time; then there came a close examination of the heath to select the ground.

Now the two men faced each other, but before any command could be given there came an interruption. A black chaise ground and screeched along the gritty lane in a cloud of dust, drove furiously on to the common, tilting over the mole hills, and bore down at a perilous pace upon the duellists. It came to a rocking halt so close that the men fell back before it. In a panic-stricken flurry of petticoats, two women leaped from the vehicle, the first a matronly figure with an expression of intense distress on her face. Repeatedly, in accents of anguish, she cried: "George! George!"

Major Fenning answered: "Eliza! What is the meaning of this?"

"Oh George!" cried Mrs. Fenning—for it was his wife—flinging herself upon

continued on page 33

Fishing village

Viewed from the sea, they huddle like old gulls,
Houses, shove-halfpenny jostling, seeking space
To breast, firm-joisted, the rough, battering winds
Of winter and the waves that pound the base
Of the town's wall where all is wrack and slaughter.

Just now the sky is friendly and the boats
Bob the small harbour pool like scattered seeds
Of elm or sycamore. Fishermen lounge
Untwisting nets and intercoiled seaweeds,
Gossiping over mother, sweetheart, daughter.

But, at the tide's edge, lost in feverish dream,
Torpedo's crash, his captain's roar, the cries
Of women, last boat aft, then night—
A boy, with sailor's hunger in his eyes,
Stares out across the tantalising water.

MABEL FERRETT

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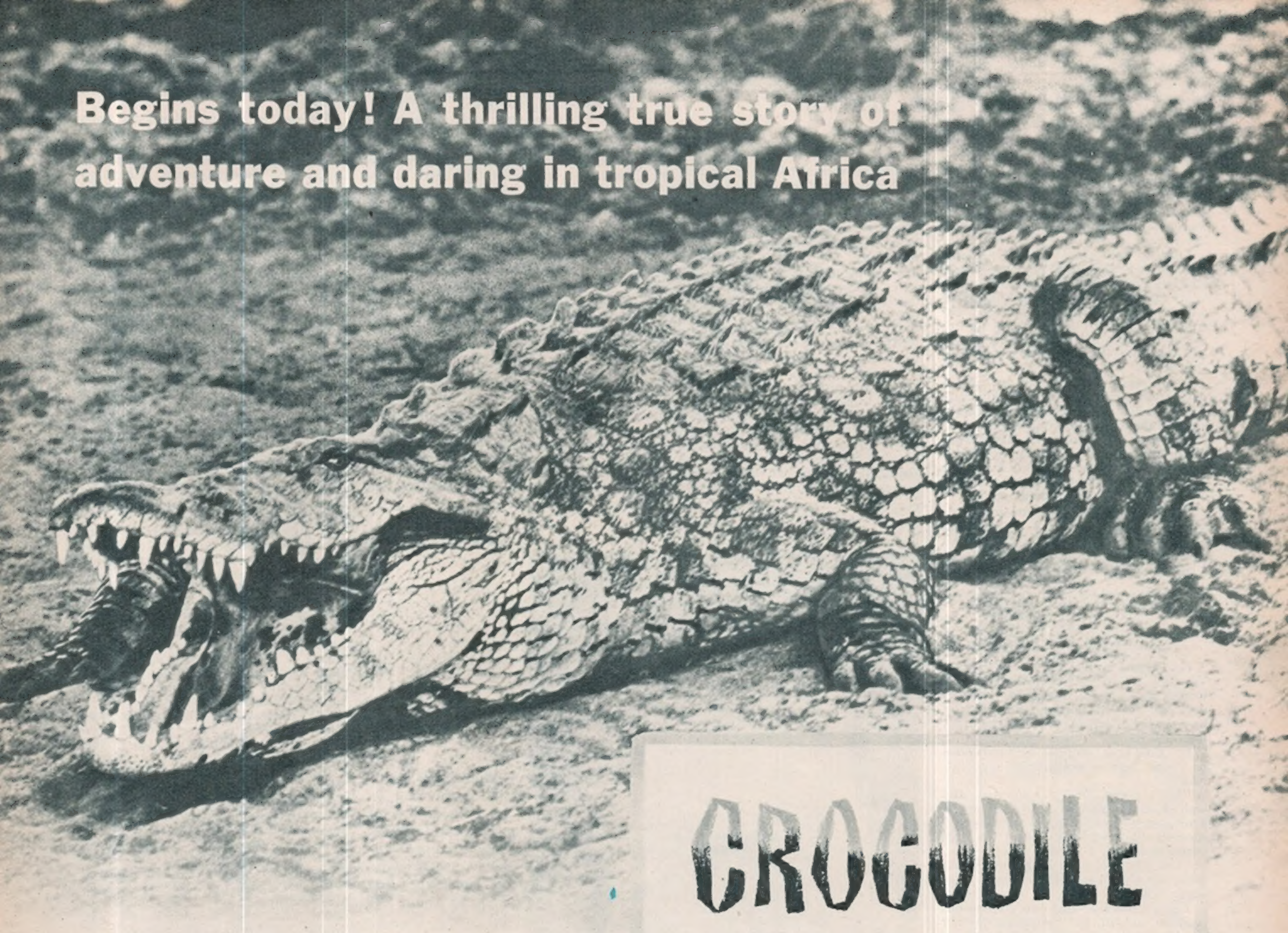

CROCODILE TRADER

by BILL SUTHERLAND

as told to Rory Macaulay

PART ONE

We catch the killers of the Zambesi—alive

IN darkness we crept through tall reeds for fifty yards to where the open water of the Njoko River, a tributary of the Zambesi, showed ahead. Sitting awkwardly in the water were three crude canoes—hollowed-out tree trunks; rough, unfinished affairs. Death traps.

Loud exclamations from the small party of African rivermen with us greeted the light as Graham Hall, my fellow-Rhodesian and companion crocodile hunter, switched on his torch. No wonder! Its beam reflected hundreds of gleaming orbs; red coals of fire.

Lurking crocs. I caught my breath. What hope would we have if we tumbled into that lot?

In the five years since leaving school—it was now December, 1956—I had forgotten most of what I had learned, but a sentence returned: *Crocodiles are responsible for more deaths in Africa than any other cause, including road accidents.*

I repeated the phrase for Graham's benefit. Graham, dark and of medium height, shrugged, his white teeth gleaming in a humourless smile, and closed the conversation with: "So what!"

Then he followed Sanganga, the rivermen's leader, down to the water's edge.

Sanganga stepped aboard one of the canoes. Gingerly we did the same, and the rest of the entourage sat on the river-bank to watch.

Sanganga at the paddles, we made for the nearest eyes, a big fellow that showed no signs of budging as we bore down upon it. Graham worked the light, keeping the eye in the beam, while I stood in the prow with our .303.

The closer the better when shooting crocs, they say, but when

Bill Sutherland and his hunting party in the Mambova swamps. He sought adventure to pay off income tax debts

Crocodile trader

continued from previous page

still some seven yards away I could bear the strain no longer. Crouching low I steadied myself and fired. The crocodile flayed the water into angry waves, sending the canoe bobbing about like a cork.

Leaning over, and nearly capsizing the canoe, Graham grabbed a front leg. Reloading feverishly I noticed that the brute was dying. But even dying crocs are dangerous. Again I squeezed the trigger.

The whole world appeared to heave, and the next thing I knew we were in the river.

Retaining a firm grip on my rifle, I floundered about in a blue funk, struggling to swim towards the bank. Then I spotted Graham and Sanganga, slightly ahead and travelling well; not swimming, but walking. I reached down and discovered that the water was little over four feet deep. Feeling slightly foolish, I followed them to the bank.

"Nice *esprit de corps* you exhibited there," I began. Then I noticed that Graham had a nasty cut above the left eye which was bleeding profusely. "How the devil did you get that?" I asked.

"Ricochet," he said, wiping away the blood. "A splinter of bone or scale."

Inches from danger

He dabbed at the spot with a handkerchief. Two inches lower and he would have been minus an eye. I decided to say nothing more about having been left in the lurch in four feet of water.

By this time dug-out and crocodile had sunk, but we needed that crocodile badly.

"Let's get it out," I suggested, and waited, but there were no volunteers. This was not surprising; croc eyes still shone unblinking as I probed the area with the torch.

"Let's have a bash at getting it out with another canoe," was my next suggestion.

Tying a handkerchief over his wound, Graham nodded, but Sanganga was not so co-operative.

"Too many crocodile, now feel hungry from blood in water," he said. He looked at the other canoes and added darkly: "These too small for three men. White men go fetch dead body, Sanganga stay on bank and frighten crocodiles with too much noise." Nor would he change his mind.

We had to go it alone. Graham paddled while I stood in the prow, using a spare paddle as a probe to try to locate the brute's carcass, if indeed it was by now a carcass. It was, but could not be raised with a paddle blade. That left only one thing to be done—jump in and drag the brute to land.

I jumped. Graham held the canoe steady beside me, rifle handy, while I groped around and finally found the body. Shuddering with revulsion I gripped a leg and began to haul it towards the bank. The carcass was heavy. I had to inch it along in a series of jerks.

After what seemed an eternity, the carcass was landed.

"What things I do for the Department of Income Tax!" I sighed, but failed to raise a laugh. . . .

Four days previously, fed up with life in Bulawayo and owing two years' arrears of income tax, I had set off with Graham to seek my fortune crocodile-hunting.

The expedition, financed on a shoestring budget—both of us were broke to the wide—had urgent legal aspects. If it failed, and I went back to Bulawayo without enough money to clear my debts, I stood a very good chance of going to prison. Furthermore, new and much stricter legislation with regard to shooting crocodiles had recently been introduced in Rhodesia. Its precise terms we did not know, or want to know at that moment. Probably we were breaking the law. . . .

However, the rivermen, in their khaki shirts and shorts, had been glad to see us. They offered to help, believing we'd come on instructions from their god Nyami-Nyami, a reputed monster serpent that lurked in the Zambesi.

As Sanganga put it: "We are poor fishermen. Crocodiles destroy our nets and the people starve. But now we are saved. Nyami-Nyami has sent you to destroy the crocodiles so that all may eat."

We were quite prepared to join the Nyami-Nyami cult. Crocodiles we had to have, and quickly.

Flushed with the success of landing our first reptile, I went back into the water, fished out the canoe and, greatly to Sanganga's consternation, we proceeded after further spoils, bagging two more fair-sized brutes and one small fellow. This shooting gave us some pointers. The closer in before firing, the better. Also, light does hypnotize the reptiles, and, as long as their eyes are kept in the beam, they will not move. Lastly, and a most salient point, crocodiles sink within seconds of being shot; it is imperative to be close enough in to grab them right away.

Graham Hall joined Bill Sutherland in his crocodile hunt around the Zambesi. They stripped the skins themselves, and sold the first three for about £27

Our catch laid out on the bank, for skinning on the morrow, we returned to camp and settled down happily in a bug-infested hut which the rivermen insisted on us using. To woo sleep was quite another matter. We were very alive to the rumbling river, especially as our success or failure depended upon its mood during the next few weeks. Should the rains break, the Zambesi would rise and shooting would be out of the question.

Dealer's big offer

Sanganga rolled up with steaming cups of coffee. And, as we drank it, we remembered our catch. In good heart we set off to attend to the skinning.

One of the skins got ruined, but we carried the remaining three to the nearby village of Mambova and loaded them aboard Horace, our dilapidated car. When the dealer at Livingstone saw them he made a quick calculation and announced: "Twenty - seven pounds ten, for the three."

Twenty-seven pounds! A fortune! And there were plenty more crocodiles where these came from!

The next halt was the bank, then the local for a few celebration beers. While we drank a tall bronzed type strolled past. "Ross, *the game warden*," somebody commented with, we felt, unnecessary emphasis.

Sanganga's news

The trip to Mambova was done in silence. Parking Horace, we checked our kit, erected our tent, and dumped all unneeded kit inside, then pressed on, walking through the bush to Sanganga's kraal. Here we had a good meal, rigged up mosquito-nets, sprinkled the floor lavishly with D.D.T., and impatiently awaited night.

We had decided to remain, meantime, hereabouts. The chances of being caught poaching were remote, provided we were careful, and this we had every intention of being.

Later, after our third drink by the fire, Sanganga broke disquieting news. He had been moody and preoccupied all evening, but we had put this down to natural reticence. Now, as I sipped a tepid beer, Sanganga stirred the sand with his toe, cleared his throat and murmured: "Too much big hippo with calf in pool. In large pool just beyond where we shoot last night."

Hippo with young are the devil, especially after dark. They are gregarious to a degree, but do not extend to man their longings for company. I shot Sanganga a look. His face seemed troubled.

"There can't be hippo in water that deep," I said. It was typically native not to warn of danger until it arrived, but now that I was warned I didn't want to know; not yet anyway.

"Farther out water too much deep," Sanganga went on, "and sometimes hippo very angry. Bite one canoe in half, turn over two more, all same moon."

We had been less than ten minutes on the water before a decent sized crocodile was shot and lugged to the bank. Tingling with excitement we returned for the next, but now there was not an eye in sight. The firing had reawakened memories of last night and the crocs had moved off.

We paddled up and down for some time, but not a croc showed and, becoming impatient, we headed through a narrow channel into a larger pool—the hippo pool. Sanganga was loth to go and, as the canoe slid through the channel, he kept repeating: "Plenty too much trouble now. Plenty trouble. Soon we all die."

"Nonsense," said Graham, who did not approve of anybody else being despondent. "If the hippo comes we will shoot it. That means plenty meat, and fat for rubbing on the skin." He leaned towards the wretched Sanganga. "Your wrinkled old skin could do with a little fat. You'd look younger and more full of marrow to the ladies!"

Sanganga shook his head. "We die now. We die," he moaned, paddling despairingly.

The pool was large; tall trees stood sentinel on the banks. It was a ghostly place. "Give us some light," I called.

Light disclosed eyes all around. The surface was alive with crocodiles. "That's a good one," Graham called excitedly, directing Sanganga as to the best approach.

Edging forward, under expert handling, the canoe scarcely raised a whisper from the waters. Crouched in the prow, I gripped the .303. If anything went wrong we'd have to swim for it.

Five yards became five feet and I sighted carefully. There must be no error. At a range of some three feet I fired. The explosion blended into the smack of a crocodile tail upon water, then there was nothing. My shot had failed to kill, and the brute had sought refuge on the bottom.

"We've lost him," bleated Graham. That was definite, there wasn't a hope of raising a wounded crocodile in this depth of water.

Mosquitoes were giving us hell, so we decided to call it a night. Sanganga's teeth gleamed when we ordered him to pull for home. The poor devil had been in a state of funk all night.

We were approaching the gap when a frightful commotion broke out in the reeds ahead. Sanganga ceased paddling with a yelp of fear. A ponderous body was crashing through the foliage. We knew what that meant—hippo. The brute was between us and safety.

Hippo in a rage

"We are dead," came Sanganga's plaintive wail, and this time I had a horrible feeling that he might be right.

"Lights, Graham."

Rising in the prow, I peered into the night as the beam wavered over vacant water, probed this way and that to halt, spotlighting, dead centre in the gap, the ugly head of a hippo.

The brute began to jump up and down in the water, exhibiting every symptom of annoyance, like a boxer prancing about before the gong, striving to intimidate his opponent.

I loosened the safety-catch on my rifle, the barrel slippery in my sweaty hands. Sanganga groaned and started to keen in a high-pitched wail.

"What now?" I asked. "We can't stay here looking at each other all night."

Graham snorted: "Press on, charge the brute, shouting like hell. Hippos hate noise. Row, you so and so, row."

"Why not beach where we dumped the kills and walk home through the bush?" I felt this was a sounder idea than charging a three-ton hippo in a frail canoe.

But close at hand the roar of a lion shattered the silence. Graham, inclining his head in the direction of the noise, again ordered Sanganga to proceed. The riverman dug his paddle into the water and the canoe bounded forward, nearly throwing me into the river.

"Shoot. Please, please, shoot," he pleaded between strokes. That was the last thing I wanted to do. A .303 bullet would only aggravate the brute, and it was bad-tempered enough already.

Sanganga began to rock to and fro in an abandon of despair. "I have not told you all," he wailed. "Many

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This dramatic line-up of suspects (right) in Los Angeles typifies America's uninhibited war on crime. Would our police methods improve by studying the U.S. way—as London bobby Norman Niblo did on a tour of American cities?

Can our police learn from the Americans?

As we start a Royal Commission on the police U.S. cops go on fighting crime with lie detectors, tape recorders—and no secrets

by C. H. ROLPH

ONE day last year on a Los Angeles boulevard the programme on my car radio was interrupted for an announcement by the chief of the Los Angeles police. He was giving a personal answer to a complaint about the police that had been voiced in the city that day. Such a thing would be inconceivable in Britain.

When some misinformed press attack shows the American police in a bad light the authorities bark back at once; or they may promise action on some complaint.

Sometimes they say too much. In England it is often impossible to refute public complaints against the police because of some prosecution which is pending—the accusations made when Guenther Podola was arrested provided an outstanding example of this.

In America there are no such inhibitions. As soon as a much convicted criminal is arrested, the police files supply and the newspapers publish his whole criminal record for every possible juror to see.

In spite of these excesses, it may be that we can learn from America in our present concern about relations between the police and the public.

One thing common to both countries is that a great many people are what I call "punishment mad." In Britain and in America judges and religious leaders are even now uniting in a sad, grim chorus in praise of imprisonment, flogging and the death penalty—the very measures which have hitherto failed us because they have always been self-defeating.

This preoccupation with punishment, the building of prisons and the advocacy of respectable forms of torture is, I believe, wholly wrong.

If we spent on crime prevention one-hundredth part of the money now spent on police cars, elaborate communications systems, telephone tapping, police dogs and the like, we could confine all these to the small field of crime that is, beyond dispute, unpreventable.

The Americans, it seems to me, are even less concerned with crime prevention than we are. Some of our police forces do, at least, have small departments concerned with it exclusively. Yet the United States have developed to a very high degree (and in their own special way) the main

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instrument needed for an all-out attack on the negative, worn-out and overloaded processes of detection and punishment: they have a high-powered "public relations" system—the one really vital thing that as yet our own police forces cannot pretend to have.

The sheer volume of American police public relations work is an aspect of the American desire to have everything down on paper.

The police are a good example of this. "I recognize the badge of my office," says the New York City cop's *Code of Ethics* (which every citizen of New York is encouraged to read), "as a symbol of public faith; I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. . . . I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favour, malice or ill-will, never employing unnecessary force and never accepting gratuities."

I got the impression that the line most closely followed (it would be in England, too) is the one about "relentless prosecution of criminals."

A good example of it in operation is the daily "line-up" of suspects in custody. Take the one at Los Angeles.

The daily parade

The Los Angeles police department headquarters is now in a vast ultra-hygienic block that looks like the winning design for a Swedish general post office. It contains a beautifully constructed cinema with a thousand seats and a stage big enough to take a full-scale floor-show. But although the policemen and their families sometimes see popular films there, the nearest approach to a floor-show is the daily parade of limelit suspects, assembled before the gaze of hundreds of policemen and potential court witnesses.

From the stage wings you go down long corridors to the big rubber-floored cells, fronted by two-inch unbreakable glass and each holding as many as sixty-five men, all in together—men of numerous races and colours, of every crime and no crime (it's pretty easy to get arrested in Los Angeles).

It's all relentless enough, at the really criminal end. But it is fair to say that the American police departments go to a lot of trouble to detect their criminals as early as possible.

If you lived in New York you might receive a letter saying:

Dear Parent,

Your child Johnny has been reported to the Juvenile Aid Bureau for misconduct as indicated below. The law requires that a parent or guardian exercise reasonable diligence in the control of his child to prevent neglect or delinquency. You are hereby advised to take all appropriate measures to prevent a recurrence. If you require any assistance, feel free to visit this office.

OFFENCE: Misuse of transit pass; playing dice or cards; pitching pennies; smoking; profane language; disorderly conduct on transit lines; possessing bean shooter; sneaking into cinema; peeping tom; truancy; engaging in street trade; bicycle-riding, forbidden area; throwing snowballs; ball-playing, forbidden area; accidentally breaking window; park regulation.

One of these crimes would have a cross against it. It's a good thing to pay the suggested visit and at least look co-operative: you can go to jail for not controlling your family.

The fact is, the United States police have even more inducement than ours have to short-circuit real delinquency and go in for "crime-prevention" in a big way—although they are not yet doing it; for the courts (they bitterly complain) are making criminal investigation more and more difficult for them.

A policeman in Sacramento told me: "This crime position will go on getting worse and worse until the judges take their blinkers off. The police all over the States are hamstrung by Supreme Court decisions in Washington. Why, if you don't have a warrant in your pocket when you're searching a house, it doesn't matter a goddam what evidence you find there—you can't use it." (In England you can.)

But they are not so badly off as they think. They *can* use evidence that no English court would listen to—at least so far. Tape-recordings of confessions, for example; and "polygraphic interrogation."

The latter is a long name for the so-called lie-detector.

The theory is that lying usually causes changes in blood pressure, pulse and breathing. My own impression was that these reactions do occur in the case of anyone who has a feeling of guilt, or who shares the general social concept of right and wrong.

I take the test

A polygraph expert in the Los Angeles police department gave me a test.

The machine will make three simultaneous graphs—of blood pressure, pulse rate and breathing; and these three read together produce (it is said) an eighty per cent rate of accuracy in diagnosis.

In my case it was arranged, because I was a sceptic with nothing to fear and yet wanted to make things as difficult as possible, that we would take pulse only. So an electrode was strapped to my hand as I sat facing the expert, with the machine on the table between us.

He shuffled a pack of cards and cut them three times, each time showing the top card to me but not seeing it himself. I was to remember carefully which three cards I had been shown (and I still do: two of clubs, ten of diamonds, king of spades); and I was to say "yes" when he turned any one of them up as he then worked right through the pack with the machine running.

Where I had said "yes" and should have said "no," the wavy line showed no perceptible difference. But where I had said "no" when confronted with a card I'd been shown before, the graph took an upward leap and recorded me as a liar.

"You're a fairly poor liar," the expert said, not unkindly (strange that one should feel nettled rather than relieved and virtuous).

United States courts have been accepting this kind of evidence since 1923.

If we contemplate importing any ideas from America, we would do better to import some of their public relations methods.

But not if they were merely to publicise more and more efficient methods of detection and pursuit. We have enough of this already in films and television programmes, and they often merely spread a vicarious excitement in itself an incentive to crime.

Crime prevention should be something that people will want to read about, or watch on the telly, and even feel that they have a part in. For in the long run, we want not a more "relentless prosecution of criminals." It is less criminals. THE END

PERSONAL COLUMN

JAMES DOOLITTLE, Treble Chance winner, now cruising off Hawaii, thanks his many thousands of friends for their congratulations and hopes they are happy in their work.

AMBITIOUS artist, tired of designing faces for toy balloons, would appreciate opportunity to cut white horses on Downs. JB 363.

DOVE dancer has a few vacancies for reliable birds. JB 364.

TO railway travellers: protect yourself against women knitters with Robinsons' Reinforced Rib-Guard, invisible under jacket.

UNDERGRADUATE would accept veteran car in exchange for unrivalled collection of "Road Up" signs, street name plates (including Downing Street), two doz. police helmets (all sizes), doctors' plates, innumerable door-knockers and a small tarboiler. JB 365.

THE cure for road congestion is the Unicycle. Learn art of balancing from Gaston, the One-Wheel Whirlwind, late Woolwich Empire.

I, LOLITA CHATTERLEY (née Blandish), of Sponge Row, Whickering, wish to state that I am changing my name to Chipolata MacTavish.

LONELY peer seeks pen pal, viscount or above, but baron might be considered in exceptional circumstances. Interests: watermarks, 18th-century nail scissors.

E. S. TURNER

I Don't Agree With The Old Saying

Putting things off till tomorrow
Is not, I'll admit, the best way
Of getting things done . . .
But at least it is one
Good means of enjoying today.

RUTH CHADWICK

English At Oh! Level

Legacy . . . . *Short skirt fashion.*
Morbidity . . . . *Essential requirement for take-over expert.*
Abate . . . . *Sophisticated nibble.*
Bibliography . . . . *Geography of Jerusalem.*
Backwoodsman . . . . *Man with head facing the wrong way.*
Liability . . . . *Able to get away with whoppers.*
Mandatory . . . . *Girl's eye view of a dance hall.*
Dilate . . . . *Live long.*
Oasis . . . . *Card player's exclamation of delight.*
Multiply . . . . *Laminated wood.*
Antelope . . . . *Runaway marriage of parent's sister.*
Aroma . . . . *Rolling stone.*

RONALD A. SLINN

Sally's New Motto

Sally turns over new leaves so fast that sometimes it's rather like skipping the book, and her latest one, she said, was to take as her motto, Do It Now, instead of, Put It Off. She had a whole afternoon free—the children were at a party—which gave her a splendid chance to sew on John's pyjama buttons before he complained again. But then she found moth in her sewing drawer, and Doing It Now she had to turn everything out.

Half-way through she came across a pile of letters labelled "To Be Answered." Sally said if ever there was a Do It Now need, this was it, as some were three months old. She dashed off a couple before she discovered that her address book was badly out of date.

Sally said she'd always been meaning to cross out the names of long-forgotten school friends and copy in all the addresses on scraps of paper that she'd stuffed into it, so she set to work. One of them was someone she'd intended to ring up ages ago, so, Doing It Now, she did, and asked them to supper the very next day.

Which, Sally realized, meant making the chocolate mousse then, that minute, or there wouldn't be another chance. She was at the critical point of beating the whites when—with horror—she saw the time. It was twenty minutes after she was due to fetch the children.

She'd always been told that procrastination was the thief of time, said Sally, but now she's not so sure.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Love To A Canteen Manageress

Beautiful are your eyes—likewise
your cheese-and-onion pies.
Oh, luscious are your lips—
ditto your steak-and-chips—
and there's nothing I wouldn't do
for your Irish stew.
For your sausage-and-mash
I've a positive pash,
on your roasts I'm as keen as
mustard.
If I can't have your heart,
then I'll settle for tart—
plum, apple or jam—with custard!

FRANCIS NEWBOLD

Fox leaned on the box. "I set these dials four days ago," he told me. "And now look at them—all dead right"

HUMBLE'S BOX

It was riddled with hocus-pocus and had been for a hundred and sixty-five years. Could this strange young man have found the way to make it work?

by YOUNGMAN CARTER

ILLUSTRATED BY SEABRIGHT

THE most shocking student I ever had in my care was a boy called Jeremy Fox. You may have heard the name already and if not I fear you certainly will within a very few years, for he has a most immoral brilliance.

He came sharply under my eye when he was studying for the science degree he never bothered to take I am the lecturer on meteorology to the college and I first noticed that thin, sly-shy face with its narrow, taunting eyes and shock of carefully wind-swept yellow hair when he stood up at the back of the class to ask the very question I had hoped would not be asked.

I had brought the wrong notes and was speaking extempore and trying to conceal the fact. Fox, as I knew immediately he opened his mouth, shared my secret. He did not expose me but played me gently, like a good fisherman, and then deliberately gave me the right answer in a careful reiteration of what I had half said.

"You mean, sir, that the Buchan Chart variations from the norm in 1869 were. . . ."

I will not bother you with details, but I made a very careful note of the young man's name in my diary and his personality was etched permanently on my otherwise erratic memory.

He continued his tactics throughout that spring, but he never caught me again. On the contrary, I found myself taking a private pleasure in glossing over a point, almost inferring ignorance, in the hope that he would rise to the bait so that I, in my turn, could hook *him*. And twice I did manage to score over him, but the victories were undignified and disturbing—the young devil always conveyed by his diffident smile that he knew my mind in detail and was several leaps ahead of me.

Now this college is not quite like those of the older universities. There is very little personal contact between student and lecturer. I avoid the bars and coffee shops in the neighbourhood and despise those colleagues who openly hobnob with students in pursuit of popularity.

But one gusty March evening, just after a whipping hailstorm, a subject on which I had been expounding, young Fox caught me in the street close to my club. The meeting had all the quality of inevitability that had marked so many of our encounters.

"Why, sir," he said, "this is a piece of luck for me. You are the very man I wanted to see. You can do me a particular favour, sir—I'm sure you will. Would it be impertinent if I were to ask you to have a drink with me. Barrons—a very nice little hole in the wall, sir—is just round the corner."

I did not wish to go into Barrons, which is next to my club, but I perceived that for once young Fox was dressed with a tolerable respectability. He was hatless, but his suit had clearly been cut for him. His linen was clean and his tie showed discreetly that he was a member of another illustrious body. It was, indeed, almost as if the meeting had been prearranged.

I took him into my own establishment and offered

GILBERT HARDING

The price of LOVE

JUST lately a wealthy American paid £65,000 for a manuscript, an illuminated medieval copy of the Apocalypse. Fabulous sums are paid for paintings, £275,000 for a Rubens, probably more for a Rembrandt to be auctioned at Christie's next April. Impressionist paintings that the artists themselves were happy to sell for a few pounds now sell for hundreds of thousands.

What accounts for this? Is it just that so many rich people want them? If so, why?

Whatever the reason you may think is the right one, a much more interesting problem remains unsolved. Why these particular paintings? Why are some pictures more valuable than others?

This is the age of scientific explanation. Every day some new mystery is solved for us and neatly tucked away in the science textbooks for future reference. Cosy little talks on television explain what life is, and recently Sir Lawrence Bragg has been explaining the nature of things to us. The one thing science cannot explain, thank Heaven, is the human heart and what matters to it.

Science cannot tell you anything about the quality of a work of art. I think it was that eminent scientist, Sir James Jeans, who pointed out that, although it could analyse and describe music, science has no way of distinguishing between good music and bad. Scientifically, music is just noise arranged in different ways, and in the same terms these precious paintings are just canvas and chemicals. Why are they worth so much?

I think the answer is something like this. There are two kinds of value, extrinsic and intrinsic. A woman I know has a raffia table mat. It is roughly made and frayed with use—it has been in her home a long time. It was made by her son, since killed in the war, when he was a little boy at school.

World of feeling

The size, shape, weight, nature of material, economic value of that table mat belong in the world which science can describe. What it means to the mother of the boy who made it belongs in the other world of values.

In the first place, works of art, books, paintings, music and so on belong in this world, they are addressed to the emotions. A work of art fails when, to use the television expression usually reserved for popular tunes, "it doesn't do anything to you." Great works of art become great because they "do" a lot, or mean a lot to a lot of people. When this happens they become in a sense commercial, and soon extrinsic and inflated values are placed upon them.

This can happen to almost anything. Many years ago I cleared out of the house a collection of moustache cups which had been used by a great uncle of mine. They were ugly, and I still think worthless. But two or three years ago Victorian moustache cups suddenly acquired an artificial value in American antique shops. I could have sold them for a handsome amount simply because they were rare, and the fashionable demand exceeded the supply. Exactly the same thing happens to great paintings.

I think we too often get our values wrong these days. Too many people like to pretend that the material world of profit and loss, working and earning, getting and spending, the world that science can describe is all that matters.

A visitor to my house, whose artistic judgment was as limited as his good manners, once remarked: "These pictures of yours must be worth a packet," with a great show of interest. When I told him they were the work of living artists of no reputation, and that I had bought them simply because I like the look of them, he dropped the subject. In his circle pictures were just a possible source of a tax-free capital gain.

His unread books

Another man I know collects first editions of modern French authors. He never reads the books, he locks them away in a bookcase with their pages uncut. "They'll be worth something one day," he says. It never occurs to him that he might be worth more as a person if he read them.

A much wiser attitude to life is expressed in a story told by the American writer, James A. Michener. In an ordinary household in Japan he was offered a cup of tea. It was brought to him in a fragile cup which was handed to him with some ceremony and great pleasure. He asked what was special about the cup. "It is more than a thousand years old," the lady told him. Later, when he had found out that the cup was historically famous and worth at least £7,000, he asked why so valuable a cup was in use. "Because it was made to drink from," the old lady told him. She preferred to enrich her life rather than her pocket.

How much? What's it worth? What's the percentage? What's in it for me? What did it cost? These questions matter sometimes, but not all the time, and today we hear them too often. The world of value is important, and people who think that it means nothing to them are deceiving themselves. Anyone who feels the slightest affection for a person, an animal, or even a place, knows something of that world, because affection is not something that can be measured in scientific terms.

It's better to know the price of a few things, and the value of some, rather than "the price of everything and the value of nothing." THE END

continued from previous page

a drink. He took a dry sherry: I, a pink gin.

"To come to the point, sir," he said. "Now I've trapped you, if you'll forgive me saying so, I wonder if you would mind looking at an antique I've just invested in?"

This was the last thing I had expected. I'd been prepared to be pumped for some hint about a question paper; but . . . antiques?

When I had agreed, Fox went on: "Of course, it's rather a peculiar kind of thing, sir. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if you'd never heard of it—though with a chap like you it's quite on the cards you know all about it." He paused, his smile half-way between a fencer's and a poker player's. "It's a Humble box," he concluded.

Now, as it happens, I know a great deal about my subject, meteorology, and quite a lot about the byways of its history. Josiah Humble (circa 1790) comes into this last category.

He was of the type who advertised his so-called invention to the nobility.

Mr. Josiah Humble, having perfected his miraculous device for the foretelling of storms, floods, droughts and every description of weather to be experienced within this kingdom, will demonstrate the machine to the general public at twelve noon in his commodious premises. . . .

I had, in fact, once inspected a Humble box in a great house in Northumberland.

"I wouldn't have suspected you of collecting curios, Fox," I said, and began to relax with a second gin. "This is a new facet of your character. I would very much like to see this ancient piece of phonusbolonus."

"It's in my rooms," he said. "But please don't write it off as a joke. I'm frightfully serious about it. You see, I think I'm on to something with it."

This flabbergasted me. Josiah Humble and his box have nothing to do with science and I said as much to Fox on the way to his rooms.

HE lived in one of the student apartment houses, in greater comfort and better taste than I had supposed. And there *was* an undoubted Humble box.

Perhaps I had better describe a Humble box. It is a large and handsome affair, as big as a coffin or a spinet and constructed in pale mahogany, inlaid with bone. It stands about three feet high on six legs and on the top are an assortment of glass-covered dials each resembling the face of a standard barometer. These are marked "Rainfall," "Wind," "Earthquakes," "Temperature," "Pestilence" and so on.

The dials are not in themselves remarkable. The oddity lies in Mr. Humble's claim that they foretold the future—if controlled by the hand-setting device beside each of them.

I was delighted to see the monstrosity again, for Humble boxes are virtually forgotten curios and, were they not so large, would probably be very valuable as furnishing pieces for decoration, like early celestial globes.

"Before you mess about with it," said young Fox, "I must tell you something. I set all these dials, for nightfall today, as you see. But the point is, I set these dials four days ago. And now look at them. You see? 'Hail—very severe,' 'Wind—gale force,' 'Temperature—35 degrees.' All dead right. How do you like that?"

I saw the joke, for it was dead against me, and laughed with him. Yet I felt once more that I was hooked and being carefully played.

"This damned thing," I said, "has just about as much virtue, scientifically speaking, as Joanna Southcott's box. Inside this fine cabinet is a collection of crude barometers, all hopelessly inaccurate, and divination hocus-pocus ranging from damp seaweed to the mummified toe of a gouty Chinese mandarin."

"Oh, sir," Fox said, and his face became dead-pan. "Do you think so? Look what it has prophesied for today."

Now I really knew that there was something in the wind. Fox was twenty-three: too old for a pointless private leg-pull.

But my dignity was at stake. "Now listen, young man," I said, "you're not barmy, so don't pretend to be. Humble's box was a fraud in its own day and never deceived anyone except a few wealthy country bumpkins. But you're a student of meteorology. If you've fetched me half across London simply to find out if you can pull my leg then you must think again."

He did have the grace to lower his eyes and I thought for a moment he was going to blush.

After quite a pause he said, measuring his words: "I was afraid you might feel that way, sir. But I do assure you that I'm not joking. Do you think you will remember my exact words, sir, if I say I believe in this box completely? I think Josiah Humble grasped a principle which has escaped others and I'm proposing to improve and perfect it."

THERE was something in his carefully chosen phrases which ought to have given me a clue, but I missed my chance because I was getting irritated.

"Look here, young Fox," I said, "you're making me very angry indeed. You're a second-year student in a very important subject. I don't believe for one moment that you are mad. Your whole future may depend on my good opinion of your work. Remember that, before you start playing the fool with me again."

With that I stormed out and slammed the door, a silly gesture which left me with an uncomfortable feeling that in some mysterious way Fox had achieved precisely the effect which he had reckoned upon all along.

I did not see him again, except in the lecture rooms and laboratories, for a couple of months. He worked hard and well. He asked questions, but they were probes for answers and the mockery had left his smile.

Then one evening he returned to the attack. He came sidling up to me after a session and murmured almost respectfully: "Can I offer you a coffee, sir? I have something I'd like to show you."

We went to one of those Kensington cafés which are decorated like Brazilian jungles furnished in chromium. He had a briefcase with him and he placed it on the counter.

"I don't quite know how to express this," he said.

"Perhaps, sir, you'll try to think of me not as one of your students but as a man consulting an expert about a business proposition.

"Will you try, sir? I mean—well, the truth is that I want a certain statement from you with your signature on it—an absolutely accurate statement, of course, sir—and I'm prepared to pay for it, just as if I were consulting a barrister or something. I'm prepared to pay fifty guineas."

I ASKED him what the devil he meant and before he answered he opened his case and pulled out a printed pamphlet.

Humble's Box Reconsidered, it said. *A treatise by Jeremy Fox.*

"Now understand this, Master Jeremy," I said. "Your behaviour has all the hallmarks of a confidence trick. You must realize quite clearly once and for all that I am having nothing to do with it."

He looked at me for the first time straight in the face. He said very firmly: "Fifty guineas is nearly all the money I have in the world. I've written the cheque and I assure you it's not rubber. All I ask is that you read my pamphlet and write me your opinion of it as an expert meteorologist, stating your qualifications, in the presence of some witnesses whom I nominate."

The infernal boy always managed to catch me on the wrong foot. Fifty guineas is a good fee.

Finally, for the influence of his personality was remarkable, I gave in.

"I'll study it," I said. "I'll give you my opinion, which I suspect will be unflattering, and I will not budge one

continued on page 37

Malcolm Carpenter

Leroy Cooper

John Glenn

Virgil Grissom

The seven happiest men on earth have what it takes to be a SPACEMAN

Walter Schirra

Alan Shepard

Donald Slayton

Tough but friendly, they're family men who take danger in their stride. And they can teach us the lessons of life

by Capt. GEORGE E. RUFF

AMERICA'S seven Mercury astronauts are now preparing for an epoch-making leap into space. This momentous flight will be made some time in 1961, when a man-carrying rocket will soar out into the unexplored frontier of space and a human being will be sent into orbit around the earth at a speed of 18,000 miles per hour.

If this flight is successful, others will follow. Man will fly higher and higher, eventually to the moon and perhaps even beyond to other worlds.

These seven men—one of whom is destined to become America's first real spaceman—are among the happiest, best-adjusted people I have ever known.

I was the air force psychiatrist who supervised a number of the key tests that resulted in their selection. Three of them came from the army, three from the navy and one is a marine. Each is a father; each is between thirty-two and thirty-seven. And each was subjected to dozens of tests for physical fitness, intelligence, stamina and psychological condition.

There were twenty-five tests in the psychological area alone. We were particularly thorough here since we knew that a journey into space will involve complexities and dangers that will tax a man's inner strength to the utmost. Standard psychological techniques in use all over the world were employed.

When the examinations were ended it was clear that these seven winners were not only excellent physical specimens but also possessed a number of specific qualities that resulted in superior emotional balance. While few people can hope to match the men as jet pilots, many can develop the same habits of living that help to make the astronauts such finely adjusted human beings in these tension-creating days.

The tests revealed an enormous amount of information about the men, but three major characteristics which every person can try to apply to his own life stood out sharply.

First, they live in reality. The astronauts do not dwell in a sort of perpetual Disneyland as so many people do. They don't waste time regretting past failures but tackle present and future problems enthusiastically. They give themselves goals that are possible to reach, rejecting those which common sense tells them are will o' the wisps.

Many people, and more especially women, on the other hand, torture themselves for a whole lifetime with thoughts that they might have won fame if they only had the "breaks." They keep reaching for rainbows that don't exist instead of getting satisfaction from things that do.

Of course, our sights should be as high as our ambitions can raise them and we should try our best to hit our targets. But we should also take a lesson from the astronauts and face facts when the moment of truth arrives. They, too, had soaring ambitions as youngsters, but they scaled them down to realistic size.

There has to come a time when a good mechanic must give up a dream of becoming a foreign correspondent, and a woman must some

day accept the fact that she won't ever be a great ballerina. Otherwise frustration can embitter an entire life. These are often hard decisions, but contentment cannot come until they are made.

There are several illuminating examples of how the astronauts live in reality and not in never-never land.

One is their attitude towards the tremendous event for which they are training. None of the seven sees himself as a swashbuckling Flash Gordon heading into the wild blue yonder to conquer space. While fully aware of its significance, each none the less considers his first space flight as an extension of his normal job—flying.

Another is their ability to put up with routine tasks without becoming bored. Real life is not always exciting; all of us must perform many ordinary chores and we should be able to do them without fretting. While the astronauts love adventure and new challenges, they can put up with tedious jobs, too. Tests revealed they are able to sit still for hours to work out problems, yet they can move swiftly and surely when necessary.

They never flap

Still another is their ability to adapt quickly to strange surroundings. The astronauts, aware that they must face life as it is and not as they want it to be, are able to make themselves at home with anything new within a short time—a job, a location, a mechanism or whatever. Many people, though, become confused by new places and methods. Refusing to let unfamiliarity mix them up, learning to switch mental gears fast when faced with new problems and techniques, can help them do more in almost any area and with less difficulty.

Secondly, the astronauts prepare for trouble before it happens.

The way an individual reacts to what psychiatrists call "stress situations" is an important clue to his emotional make-up. Some people go to pieces in a crisis, while others take it in their stride. Part of the secret lies in anticipating trouble and preparing for it.

Our tests showed, for example, that the astronauts know exactly what they will do in emergencies—serious as well as lesser ones. One of the worst things that can happen to a jet pilot is a flameout when an engine stops suddenly in mid-air. The specific steps the men will take are charted firmly in their minds. But advance planning is automatic with them in problems of daily living as well. They would know ahead of time what must be done in a car accident, a sudden transfer from a post or even if it should rain on a picnic.

Thus a housewife who is giving a dinner party would be wise to decide what she would do if the roast should burn or the food run out. A husband should have emergency plans ready for contingencies: how to evacuate his family in case of fire, what to do if he suddenly lost his job, how he would handle a car breakdown far from help.

Because they are mentally geared to this kind of advance planning, the astronauts possess another plus quality: they do not act impulsively. They weigh the pros and cons, aware that a few moments of reflection can save months, even years, of regret.

Thirdly, they can get along with, and without, people. Getting along with others is one of the prime requisites for both success and personal contentment. But just as important is the ability to detach yourself when necessary and function alone.

Let me explain this significant yet little-known factor in human behaviour. Knowing how to develop and keep personal ties is essential to our happiness because we need the company and stimulation of people—but there is a trap. Too many people become over-dependent on their friends and co-workers. They become too concerned with maintaining good social relations. They need the approval of others to an unusual degree. As a result, their own advancement or individual growth may be hampered.

Secret of success

For example, a man with this attitude might feel guilty about accepting promotion because the new job would place him above his friends and he might thus earn their disapproval. Such a man, moreover, makes a poor boss, because he cannot bring himself to discipline subordinates properly. Many women, too, will not stand up for what they truly believe for fear of offending their friends. They may even permit impositions, such as allowing neighbours to drop in at odd hours, rather than say no.

On the other hand, lack of concern for others is equally undesirable—as witness the over-aggressive man or woman who claws to the top in brutal disregard of others.

Take a leaf from the astronauts' book. Enjoy people, but don't be afraid to take action, when it is called for, which puts you in conflict with them. Proof that the seven follow this rule came during the tests after the choice had narrowed to thirty-two airmen. Although they liked being with the others and got along famously with them, the seven not only competed hard but enjoyed surpassing their rivals. None exhibited any guilt feelings about leaving the others behind.

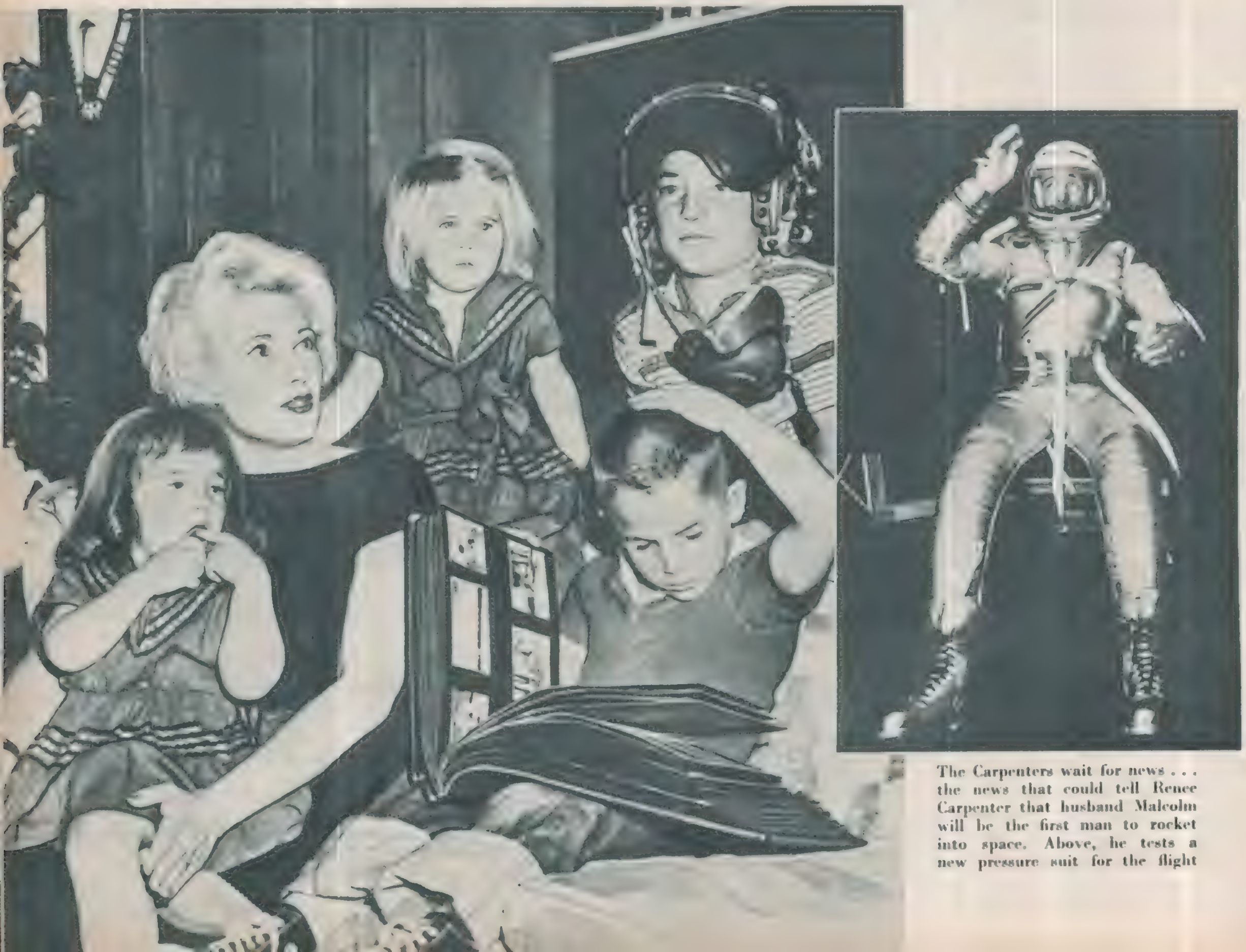
Further, the astronauts never seek help on a job unless they need it—another measure of their independence. They are not easily frustrated, angered or confused, but can see a task through to a successful completion. Many people become discouraged at stumbling blocks and, instead of trying to hurdle them, run for guidance. Thus they fall into a habit of relying on others. Try to solve your own problems. The reward is a zestful sense of accomplishment.

While these seven are hoping to be spacemen, they are by no means supermen. Even though they are training to soar out of this world, they possess a number of very earthy qualities.

They are human beings, with human reactions and even human failings, not Sir Galahads with the purest of souls who are far above normal people. They *are* normal people. They make mistakes, get angry under proper provocation, have happy but not happy-go-lucky dispositions, are certainly not nerveless.

Each came from a small American town, each from a more or less average background, and each worked hard at attaining his present excellent level of emotional balance.

Knowing the qualities that made them this way and working hard at applying them in daily living can help everyone to come closer to being what they are: comfortable, mature and well-integrated individuals. It is a worthwhile goal. THE END



The Carpenters wait for news . . . the news that could tell Renee Carpenter that husband Malcolm will be the first man to rocket into space. Above, he tests a new pressure suit for the flight

'I have not yet begun to fight,' says Mr. Home, in the battle to save . . .

It started with murder — by the critics. But Auntie's author says his shocking show must go on. . . . He has even sold his last Bentley

by ALAN LLOYD

AUNT EDWINA sat down haughtily at her dressing table in the West End's Fortune Theatre, smoothed her blue brocade evening dress, and told me: "Angry? I was bloody furious."

She was referring to the ungentlemanly handling she had received from London's theatre critics. Aunt Edwina, in the play of the same name, is a fox-hunting colonel with the D.S.O. and two bars who embarrasses his "county" family by changing sex. The critics objected strongly to the theme.

In fact, never before had a theatrical lady received such ill-treatment at their hands as did Edwina. By the normal rules of the business she should not have lasted a week.

Yet here she was, more than six weeks later, in the person of Henry Kendall, the veteran actor, producer and pantomime dame, very much alive and assertive. "In forty years' experience," said Kendall, "I have never known such a violent critical onslaught. Neither have I known an author fight back in such sparkling form. The whole thing is quite unique." Indeed, whatever one thinks of the play itself, the drama behind its survival has all the ingredients of lively entertainment.

The curtain rises (so to speak) on a drawing-room in the country house of the Hon. William Douglas Home, Old Etonian son of an earl, and author of such money-spinning plays as *The Chiltern Hundreds* and *The Reluctant Débutante*.

In common with the setting of Aunt Edwina, there is a large portrait over the fireplace, a radiogram, family photographs, the glitter of drinks on a sideboard and two Italian servants.

Here, amid the conservative meanderings of Hampshire's Meon Valley, Home, an elegant and aesthetic-looking forty-seven, completed his unlikely farce and collected the notices (mainly favourable) on Aunt Edwina's pre-London tour.

And from here, accompanied by his lovely young wife Rachel, a friend of Princess Margaret, he drove in high-powered comfort towards the glamour of that ill-fated West End first night.

It was November 3, and goodwill telegrams were arriving at

Audiences cheered when author William Douglas Home went on to the stage and asked if they wanted his play to stay on

AUNT EDWINA

ACT 1 scene 1

Enter Aunt Edwina (Henry Kendall) *after* changing sex ... and at a midnight party an excited Anna Wiman (centre) and Margaretta Scott toast success. But that was before...

continued from previous page

the Fortune Theatre in bundles. One, addressed to the company and saying, "My very sincere wishes for a successful opening and a long run," was signed by Anna Deere Wiman, the American heiress—financially, the most important backer of the show.

Another telegram ("Every good wish to you all for tonight and may you have a long run") came from Paul Clift, an elderly "angel" who partnered Miss Wiman in presenting *Aunt Edwina*. Home put in a "nominal" £100.

"I didn't make a curtain speech," says Home. "I don't think that an author should come between the audience and the cast of his play." Instead, together with others concerned with the production, he went to a first-night celebration thrown in a Park Lane house by Anna Wiman. Champagne flowed, the hostess sparkled and Margaretta Scott, the handsome leading lady of the show, cut a large cake.

Long after both the theatre and the glasses at Miss Wiman's celebration were empty, a party of four people awaited the verdict of the critics in a fashionable West End nightclub. They were William and Rachel Home, their friend Brian Johnston, the TV commentator—Johnston had a small amount of money in the play—and Home's agent, John Barber, a former critic.

'It's a stinker'

There, in the unrealistic light of an early clubland morning, Johnston and Barber phoned the newspapers. "I heard words like 'lousy' and 'stinker'," says Home.

More precisely, the reviews included such phrases as, "an unappetizing farce" (*The Guardian*); "palpably unfunny by any standards" (*Daily Mail*); "the joke doesn't work out" (*Daily Telegraph*), and "quite unbearable" (*Daily Express*). In all, it amounted to attempted assassination.

Aunt Edwina seemed doomed to be the ninth in a staggering sequence of flops since the autumn theatrical season had opened a few weeks earlier. About £250,000 had been laid out on the eight plays already closed.

At her home in Gloucester Place, Margaretta Scott read the papers next morning and felt "slightly hysterical."

As soon as the reviews appeared, cancellations began to come in at the Fortune on advance bookings, which, so far, had been reasonably good. Three days after Aunt Edwina made her London début, Clift declared that she should be put down. The next day, Home had lunch with Anna Wiman and asked her to give Aunt Edwina at least a temporary reprieve. She agreed, provided he covered the running expenses of the show (as distinct from the expenses of running the theatre). With poor houses it could cost him more than £500 a week.

It was decided that Clift's "run of the play" contracts with the company should end and new contracts were drawn up between Home and Miss Wiman.

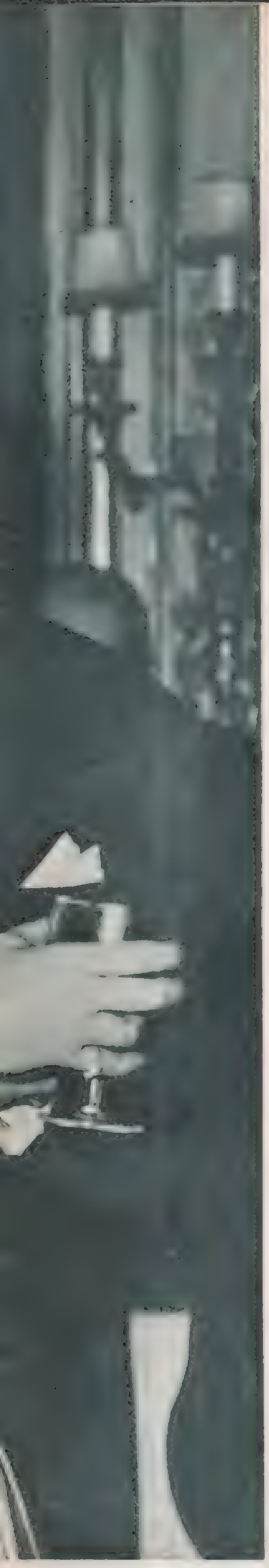
Home had been studying audience reaction at the theatre. Though customers were sparse, they seemed to enjoy their evenings-out with his disparaged brain-child. On Saturday night he walked on to the stage at the end of the play and asked for a round of applause if the audience agreed with the critics. There was silence.

Then he asked for applause if the audience thought that the show should go on. With the exception of one dissenter, who was promptly silenced by fellow galleryites, the audience gave Aunt Edwina a cheery thumbs-up.

Another fiery blast

"I concluded that if the public could enjoy her, it was worth fighting to keep her alive whatever the critics thought," says Home. "I believed that most of them had committed the original sin of taking a comedy seriously."

That weekend, the Sunday papers delivered another blast. *The People* informed its massive family of readers that *Aunt Edwina* had made a "sad



ACT 1 scene 2

The plot thickens. Now we meet the villains of the piece: the critics. "It's unfunny," they say, "unbearable...unpleasant." As the box-office slumps, backers withdraw money from the show. Climax: crisis. It looks like curtains for Auntie, but...

ACT 2

Audiences like the play; the cast rallies round. Some take pay cuts, and one gets her hairdresser to boost the show. And so to the 50th performance with a celebration on-stage. It's still touch and go.

ACT 3

The play closes at the Fortune, but Home fights on. "Aunt Edwina is not dead yet . . ."

effort to be funny," while Harold Hobson, of the *Sunday Times*, a senior and respected member of the critics' circle, abandoned chivalry altogether. "*Aunt Edwina*," he wrote, "fortified the transvestism of *Charley's Aunt* with change of sex; thus to the fatuous adding the unpleasant." Enough to hurt the feelings of anyone's aunt.

When Home mentioned it to his father-in-law, Viscount Hampden, he was told :"*Charley's Aunt* had one bad joke; you've got about two good ones. It's worth keeping it on."

Home took his father-in-law's advice. Every night, for a week, he went on the stage and defended Aunt Edwina against her detractors. If a handful of critics were allowed to kill a play overnight, he said, dramatists would cease to write for the public. They would write only for the critics. He sent telegrams to the critics inviting them to appear in front of the audience with him to debate the issue, but there were no takers.

Instead, Hobson invited Home to lunch with him at the modish Caprice restaurant in Mayfair. They chatted amicably about Aunt Edwina and change of sex.

Next day, another newspaper phoned Home and asked if it were true that he had lunched at the Caprice on the previous day with a lady.

"A certain amount of confusion was creeping in," recalls Home.

A sign of hope

The days passed. Aunt Edwina gained a little strength, lost a little, then revived again. Clad alternately in a blue brocade gown and hunting skirt, she now stalked with something approaching rebellious dignity through her trial fortnight. But she was still far from making a profit.

"I am down to my last Bentley," Home announced.

If the Fortune was not full of people each night, it could not be denied that it was full of laughter. Several celebrities had met *Aunt Edwina* and liked her. Ronald Shiner and Ann Todd had been amused. Sir Compton Mackenzie had sent a telegram of congratulations, and an appreciative Lady Astor had told the author: "You *can't* have written it. It's so much better than your usual ones."

At the end of a fortnight, Home, supported by his wife, met Anna Wiman at her Dover Street office to talk about Aunt Edwina's future. In a small, businesslike room, surrounded by photographs of theatrical productions, Miss Wiman made it clear that she was not anxious to risk any more money on that particular sector of the theatrical stock exchange.

But she said that if Home now undertook to cover *all* expenses—about £1,200 a week—the show could run on. He agreed.

Next day the author was drafting a defence of Aunt Edwina, which later appeared in a newspaper, when Miss Wiman's solicitor phoned. He was informed that she would *not* allow the show to go on. Aunt Edwina did not know whether she was coming or going.

Before she could recover from her tizzy, Home had whisked her case to the High Court, seeking an injunction restraining her reluctant "angel" from withdrawing the play. As Home and his advisers waited in the "bear garden"—the noisy hall where lawyers meet outside the court of the judge in chambers—they talked with Miss Wiman's lawyers, and by the time Home was called before the court an agreement had been reached. The show was to go on again.

Battle for cash

"I had until midday to raise the cash for a guarantee to keep Auntie going," recalls Home. At five minutes to twelve he clinched it with an old army friend who was a car dealer. Home sold his Bentley. There was still his wife's Sunbeam Rapier to fall back on.

Home was fighting a lonely action. Clift, though still in a position to draw

continued on page 24

You can fly to San Francisco for a holiday

It's just the job—plus perks

by KEITH ELLIS

Tycoon, clerk, shopgirl . . . we all have a private fiddle, cashing in on a boom in tips, gifts and goods on the cheap

GILLIAN COOKE, a twenty-four year old London secretary, recently took her husband for a three weeks' air trip round the world. They visited temples in Bangkok and surfed in Sydney. They sheltered from five inches of rain in a single day in Fiji and admired the beauties of San Francisco Bay.

Though they had saved hard for their holiday, they could not have afforded it if Gillian—pictured above—had not worked for B.O.A.C. As a staff member, she was entitled to travel with her husband on B.O.A.C. flights at a tenth of the normal fare—provided there were vacant seats. Even though they had to use another airline to cross the Pacific, the trip cost them only £300 instead of £1,000.

Today, millions of jobs in Britain pay extras. "Perks," far from being the preserve of £5,000-a-year directors, are enjoyed by ordinary men and women in every type of occupation. They may be given in kind or cash. They include tips, bonuses, vouchers, free samples, meal allowances, inflated overtime, profit-sharing schemes and the privilege of buying products at reduced prices.

Sometimes perks are given once only—as when a chemical company, aiming to popularize a silicone treatment for cloth, presented all its representatives with free, tailor-made, silicone-treated suits. Usually, they are given so regularly that the employee bases his standard of living on the expectation of receiving them; if they fail to materialize he finds himself in trouble.

Of a recent crop of wildcat strikes, no fewer than three were concerned not with wages or

. . . earn £5 a week—and die rich . . . or get a free lunch every day

working conditions but with a threatened loss of extras. The railway dining-car staffs were worried about a possible cut in tips, the "honeymoon" strikers thought the transfer of a man from night-shift to day-shift would affect their output bonus, and the Sheffield busmen feared that their overtime earnings were to be reduced.

Of perks in kind, those given by transport undertakings are among the most valuable. Railwaymen get between four and nine free passes a year for themselves and their families, according to their grade and length of service.

Travel concessions have not always been used wisely. On summer Fridays, B.E.A. typists used to go straight from their offices in Keyline House to nearby Northolt Airport to wait for vacant seats—at a tenth of the normal fare—on flights to the Channel Islands.

Girls stayed the night

"They usually got there," says an official, "but when they tried to return on the Sunday evening the flights were fully booked. They had to borrow money from the airport manager to pay an extra night's hotel bill and were absent from work on the Monday."

Most firms manufacturing consumer goods make allowances to their staffs. A large tobacco combine gives its male workers forty cigarettes a week or two ounces of tobacco. The women get twenty cigarettes.

A leading brewery makes a distinction between its pay-roll workers and office-staff. The pay-roll workers are allowed three free pints of beer a day in the canteen; the staff have £24 worth of beer a year delivered to their homes.

One of the oddest perks is supplied by a pharmaceutical company. Every week its nine hundred workers get a dozen aspirins each in their pay packets. A concession given by a well-known chocolate firm reveals an interesting sidelight on human nature. "We allow them to eat as much as they like while they're working," says an official. "After the first week, they get fed up and don't take any more."

Like many others, both these firms run a shop where workers can buy their products at cut-prices. A well-known car firm allows its employees ten per cent off the basic price of a new car.

Perhaps the most valuable concession of this kind is that enjoyed by employees of a store which has hundreds of branches all over the country. They are each given a small white card which entitlles them to a discount of between eight and twenty-five per cent at any of the firm's branches. This firm extends the same privilege to pensioners. Another organization whose pensioners benefit is B.E.A. It allows a retired employee and his wife one free flight a year.

Some perks cost employers millions of pounds. Every year, about 600,000 mine workers are allowed five million tons of coal, some of it free, some for 10s. a ton, at a cost to the National Coal Board of £20 million at current pit-head prices. Miners are particularly fortunate. If they do not want the coal they can take cash instead, and by a special dispensation of the Inland Revenue they do not pay tax on it.

Perhaps the fastest spreading perk is the luncheon voucher. Every month, 7,500 firms—6,900 of them in London—give out more than three million tickets issued by Luncheon Vouchers Ltd., a consortium of restaurateurs. Around 150,000 workers benefit. In addition, over 1,300 firms run their own private schemes.

The vouchers are worth, on average, three shillings each, and a week's supply, after taking tax into consideration, is almost equivalent to an extra £1 in the pay-packet.

Hostess didn't eat

Some employees get cash allowances instead of luncheon vouchers, and though these are taxable, they can—by economizing on their food—make an appreciable addition to their income. But this practice may lead to abuses.

Only recently a B.E.A. air hostess told her doctor she felt exhausted after three days on flights to the Mediterranean. Under questioning, she admitted she had not eaten proper meals and in the three days had taken only a small piece of fish and a hunk of bread. Although her pay was in the range of £10-£14 10s. a week she preferred to save as much as possible of her daily meal allowance of 10s. to 18s. "Besides," she said, "I prefer to stay slim."

In 1954, the Ministry of Labour calculated that five hundred firms employing half a million workers had schemes for employees to share in the profits without reference to individual output. Sometimes they gave cash, sometimes shares.

The least talked-about perk is the tip. Those

continued on page 24

TOO MANY GHOSTS latest romantic thriller by PAUL

DEATH IN THE CARDS

Hero listened sceptically to the fortune-teller. But suddenly came a frightful warning—and even the earth seemed to tremble

ALL hell would be let loose at Paradine Hall at three in the morning, Alexander Hero had been certain of that. He had been certain too that, when it came, Susan Marshall—a girl in terrible danger—would be safe behind the bolted door of her room. But now he was numb with dismay. Susan had disappeared. . . .

Hero was investigating a sequence of supernatural happenings at the Hall. Poltergeist tricks had tormented the Spendley-Carters, guests in the east wing, which was run as a country club. But much more frightening were the events concentrating around Susan, who was a guest of the Paradine family themselves. Her room had been devastated. A strangled rabbit was found at her place at dinner. The spectral Paradine nun had laid an icy hand on her throat. An attempt had been made to disfigure her with acid.

This was not all. A harp had played by itself. That and the nun, so the Paradine legend ran, presaged doom.

Human feelings, too, were making the hall a house of torments. Susan was loved by young Mark Paradine, and also, Hero suspected, by Sir Richard Lockerie. . . . And Beth, Mark's sister, pined for Richard. . . . Then there was Vivyan Wilson, a club guest; she was interested in Hero himself—she had come to him on a pretext just before those early morning alarums—and her husband was jealous. And the child Noreen hated the Spendley-Carters, who had adopted her.

But always it was Susan's danger that was first in Hero's mind. He had indirectly warned Richard Lockerie of that, not mentioning Susan by name, but telling him to watch over and protect *someone who means a great deal to you.*

PART SIX

SIR RICHARD LOCKERIE, in an agony of apprehension, groped his way through the corridors in search of that one who, in Alexander Hero's words, *meant a great deal to him.* He had kept himself under control during the first thunderous reminder that the poltergeist had returned to Paradine Hall, and the subsequent failure of the lights. He had stood at his door, but remembered Hero's instructions not to use his torch if it could be avoided, and not to grab.

Thus he held himself in check when something rushed past him in the corridor; and again when there appeared to be light flying footsteps in pursuit, and a soft sob he thought he recognized, and which sent a chill of fear to his heart.

But when he heard a scream from the east wing and Lord Paradine shouting about the lights, he could contain himself no longer and rushed to find her. He saw that her door stood wide open. He beamed his flashlight inside. The bed was no longer occupied. She was not in her room.

At this moment his torch failed, and he could not get it going again.

Lockerie was ordinarily as cool and brave a man as any, but now he was seriously upset. Blindly he almost fell down the narrow stairway leading to the floor below, but caught himself at the bottom, and stood there panting, not knowing which way to turn.

IN the pitch black beyond and to his left a faint light was coming from a door that was partly open. He burst through, to find himself in the library, where dull moonlight filtered in through the high windows. Standing beside them was the girl he was looking for. "Beth—Beth!" he called to her. "Don't be frightened—it's me, Richard."

The next instant she was folded to him, clinging desperately.

"Beth, my darling!"

"Richard! Dearest Dick!"

"Beth—I have loved you for so very long."

"I have too, Dick—ever since I can remember."

There were deep shadows on the far side of the library. Within those shadows something lurked—a dark shape, faceless through the shrouding of the nun's cowl. . . .

Beth was whispering: "I thought it was Susan you loved, Richard. I was sure it was Susan, and I loved you and Julian so much. . . . I'll be a good mother to him, Richard."

Lockerie said: "I was nearly driven out of my mind when you weren't in your room."

"I thought I saw the nun," Beth said. "I wanted to put an end to this hateful thing that has been haunting us—I followed her."

Sir Richard said: "You were very brave."

Beth said: "No. I suddenly found myself alone in the dark and was terrified."

Lockerie put his cheek to her hair and murmured: "Beth, dear Beth. Julian and I need you. You'll never be alone again."

Silently, the figure in the shape of a nun slipped unseen towards the door. . . .

MEANWHILE Hero had pulled himself together and was thinking swiftly what to do. His first concern was for Susan Marshall. If whoever or whatever it was that hated her had been able to get at her, the consequences might be tragic.

Then in the darkness he heard a cry: "No! No! Let me go!"

It was Susan. He ran towards her, then, suddenly, the lights came on. The person in whose grip Susan was clutched was Mark Paradine.

"Hold still, you little fool!" he was saying. "Didn't you hear Alexander say stay locked in your room? Are you trying to get killed?"

"Oh, let me go!" Susan shouted. "I'm sick of what Alexander says——"

Hero felt an enormous relief. "Sorry to have to interrupt," he said. "Susan, why didn't you tell me when you found the bolt had been removed from your door?"

She turned upon him angrily and said: "Because I'm tired of all this. I didn't notice the bolt until just before going to bed. It made me so angry that when all this bedlam began I decided to go after whoever or whatever it was and have it out."

Mark Paradine examined a scratched wrist. He said: "I thought she might do something like that and came to see. I ran into her in the dark. My word, she didn't half claw!"

"Oh!" Susan said, still in a rage, "I hate men—stupid, stupid men!"

At that precise moment the harp played.

Hero stood rigid there in the corridor, listening to the ancient strains drifting to them from

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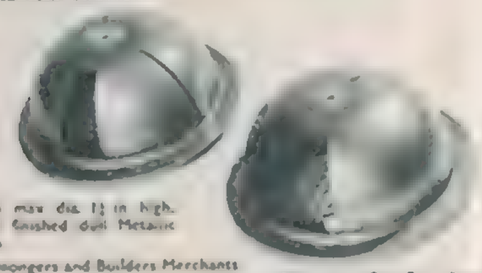

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Too many ghosts

continued from page 20

the music-room below, his mind fitting the words to them:

My Bonnie dear, thy face so dear to me—
So fair art thou that none shall dearer be. . . .

Hero ran for the small back staircase leading to the rooms below, with Susan and Mark behind him. Lord Paradine met them. "Come on, Hero!" he shouted. "We'll get at it this time."

Hero saw that Lady Paradine was there, too—there seemed to be a kind of public meeting going on. Beth and Sir Richard were together in dressing-gowns. Alfred Jellicot was there, wearing his daytime trousers, and Hero wondered how he had got there so quickly.

The music, tinny and tinkling, still filled the corridor. Hero turned the knob of the music-room door. "Why, it's locked!" he cried. "I gave orders it was to be left open."

My Bonnie dear, bright are the summer days and sweet the nights;
And thou, my. . . .

The music broke off. Hero put his shoulder to the door. His thrust smashed the lock and he burst through, catching himself in time to flick on the wall switch. The room was empty.

The harp stood where it had always been, but the strings of it were still vibrating.

BREAKFAST and luncheon were usually served to the club guests in the small dining-room of the country club, but that next morning Hero had requested that everyone should meet together in the great hall for breakfast.

After the meal he looked about him at a group of frightened people. Then he said: "There is one set of phenomena I wish to clear up here and now, and another I expect to shortly: they concern the poltergeist.

"The disturbances taking place in the room of Miss Isobel Paradine—they are natural and the result of two unusual and extraordinarily high tides.

"I have been in touch with the Hydrographic and Geodetic Offices in Yarmouth. There is a subterranean stream that passes close to the foundations beneath Miss Paradine's bedroom. Tidal pressures on the coast flood the watercourse, affecting the foundations and certain walls."

He took out a small booklet from his pocket, consulted it and said: "The highest tide in eighteen years, coupled with a gale, occurred on the night the first manifestation took place. Last night's tide was only a few inches lower. The great crash that you heard was the overturning of Miss Paradine's tallboy. The next time the furniture in that room may shift will not be until 1976."

"What about the other poltergeist?" queried Spendley-Carter.

"Ah," replied Hero, "yes, indeed. We should be seeing the end of the other poltergeist shortly. As for the nun, the harp—and, I might add, the rabbit and the upset room—one ghost at a time, gentlemen, please."

He rose, left the dining-hall and went up to his stepsister's room. She beckoned him into the bathroom, where she had set up her processing gear

"On your right," she said, "Little Snooper's bag." She was pointing at the pictures taken with her concealed camera while the poltergeist performed in the Spendley-Carters's room.

"Oh, lovely!" he said. "Darling—what would I do without you?"

Meg replied: "Not too badly, I should say," and he failed to perceive the odd note in her voice. They moved on. "There's your nun," Meg said.

He examined the photograph. It told Hero very little, since the apparition was sideways to the camera and the face was inside the hood. However, the figure was solid and real.

"Where was this camera?" he asked.

"At the foot of the stairs on our side of the house," she said. "The trip thread of the camera caught her as she was heading towards the library."

"Or the music-room," Hero added.

"Or the music-room," repeated Meg.

Hero looked up at Meg. "What about the one in the library?" he asked.

She pointed to another enlargement on the wall. Hero gave a gasp of amazement. He inspected with fascination the most astonishing photograph of Alfred Jellicot. He was bent over the big writing desk and seemed to be removing a paper from it.

"Looks to me as though he were pinching something," Meg said.

Hero whistled, and then said: "But why? Why? That doesn't make any sense either."

They came to a photograph which looked like rush hour in the Underground. "Good Lord," Hero said.

Meg said: "Yes, I know. You all apparently hit the trip thread simultaneously. That's the music-room."

Hero mused: "Then nobody went into the music-room from the time you set up your little boxes."

Meg nodded. "That's true."

"Any pictures of Isobel, or the unspeakable Freddie?" Hero asked.

"Here's one of Isobel."

Hero looked at it. In it Lord Paradine's sister was as he had seen her in the music-room in her dressing-gown with her bunch of keys at the girdle.

Hero said: "That's all right. Lord Paradine said that she'd gone after her keys. That's the lot, is it?"

Meg replied: "Oh no. There's one more over here. I've been saving it."

It was unnecessary for Hero to apply the magnifying glass. Camera number five had registered what might be called a speaking likeness of himself before the door of his room. In his arms was the willing Mrs. Wilson.

Hero said: "Meg, you monster!"

They burst into roars of laughter.

HERO said: "I was just about to get rid of her when her husband turned up with a gun."

Meg was suddenly grave. "Sandro, was there any trouble?"

"Not really. It wasn't me he was hunting with a gun—it was the ghost. All hell had broken loose in the east wing at that time. But I think he was a little irritated, nevertheless."

Meg grimaced. "And what about the harp?" she said. "I heard it."

"Someone *had* been playing the confounded thing," Hero said. Then he shook his head: "But they couldn't have, unless. . . ."

"Could you reproduce the phenomenon yourself—if you tried?"

Hero shook his head gloomily. "Not under those conditions."

Meg tried another tack. She asked: "Do any of them here play musical instruments, Sandro?"

Hero snorted. "Just about everybody. I've been looking into it. Her ladyship plays the piano, which is nothing but a harp in a box. Cousin Freddie plunks a guitar. Isobel in her youth once practised the 'cello. Our grocer friend Jellicot plays the organ in his church. And then there's Beth."

"Beth!" cried Meg.

"When she was a little girl her grandmother taught her to pick out one tune on the harp. It was 'My Bonnie Dear'."

"Crikey!" Meg exclaimed.

LATER that day, Hero and Noreen took the walk he had promised her. When they reached the river she faced him suddenly. "Will you wait for me to grow up, and then marry me?" Noreen said.

"Perhaps," Hero said, "but I thought you wanted to be a nurse."

He noticed the immediate change in her—this went deep. Tears came into her eyes. "They won't let me," she whispered. "Oh, how I hate them!"

Hero asked: "What if I were to help you, Noreen?"

The child stared at him unbelieving, and suddenly sat down upon the riverbank. "Could you?" she cried.

Hero lit his pipe and sat down beside her. "I might try," he said.

Now she was pleading with him. "Would you make it a promise," she said. "One that can't be broken ever?"

"If I were to make such a promise," Hero said, "I should keep it—but I would want one from you, too. The rabbit on Susan Marshall's plate wasn't very nice, you know."

For a moment an expression of cunning came into her face, but it passed at once. "Oh," she said, "that was meant for Mummy. It got mixed up all in the dark when the candles went out. Why did they go out?"

Hero replied: "The candles went out because somebody wished them to do so. I shan't show you the trick, because you might be tempted to use it."

Noreen's voice took on the confidence of one exchanging shop talk with a fellow professional. She said: "But I did make the chair move at dinner."

Hero sucked at his pipe and nodded. "Yes, I know how you did that. You pulled on the chair with two ends of a piece of string around the bottom rung held in one hand under the table; then let one end go, rolled up the string and hid it."

The child looked at him in awe.

"I know a lot more, too," Hero went on. "About stones that appear to come in through the windows or drop from the ceilings, vases that seem to fly off the mantelpiece but are really produced from behind a curtain by a too-clever

continued on page 35

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NEXT WEEK

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

by Roger Smithells

Don't despair if your floors are shabby. Here's the secret of how to make them sparkle

New look for old floors

A gleaming wooden floor can do much to complement a room. Now you can make old floors look like new

THE floor is the part of the room which gets most wear and, unless your house is brand new, the chances are that you have inherited floors which are far from satisfactory. Years of castors digging into the same places leave a legacy of dents in composition floorings, and gouge out splintery holes in old boards. Previous occupants of the house have usually smothered the surfaces of board floors with layer after layer of treacly stain, the stickiness of which has attracted a thick spongy layer of dust and old fluff.

The modern trend is towards the lighter, brighter look for flooring, and on the next page you will find detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to renovate an old, boarded floor. It is usually possible to hire a sanding machine from a local builder. Some towns have a store which specializes in do-it-yourself hire. The size of the machine makes removal of the surface of the floor easy. You have to get down to a little below the old wood surface to reach a layer which is not affected by the stain, so the first move is to punch nails down below the surface.

At this stage, you should also fill up cracks between the boards, by cutting wooden fillets to size, and hammering them in, or mixing up filler of papier mâché, forcing it between the boards, and staining it to match.

New sealing compounds have made the job of finishing very much easier, both to apply, and to care for afterwards. The gleaming floor in the picture at the top of this page needs only a broom and occasional wet mop to keep its shining look. But many people prefer the look of a waxed floor, and you can apply this finish instead, after the sanding-down process. If you want to darken the colour of the floor, treat it first with a wood dye, in the colour you have chosen. Pick a dye which is a few shades lighter than the final colour you want, as polishing tends to darken the wood. Then polish with a good quality wax polish, applying several coats.

To keep the natural colour of the wood, and achieve a satiny smooth surface, there is a longer, but rewarding course to follow. Buy from a chemist a bag of pumice powder and a bottle of boiled linseed oil. Wrap an old rag round a wooden block, dip in oil and sprinkle with pumice powder. Then rub into the floor. Keep the rag moist and continue until the floor is covered. Leave it a day to soak in. Oil again, without powder. Repeat this process every day for a fortnight. The oil and pumice will soak into the surface of the wood, filling the grain, and putting a smooth, gleaming surface on it. Keep the floor bright by burnishing with a polisher and periodic polishing with a good beeswax polish.

A really unsightly boarded floor, which is not fit for sanding, can be disguised altogether by covering it with sheets of hardboard. Before you put down the hardboard examine the floor and remove any protruding nails. If there are a few large dents or cracks these should be filled. Papier mâché is probably the easiest material to use. Buy the hardboard in small enough sheets to be easily manageable and fix it down either with "lost head" panel pins or adhesive. The panel pins should be of rust-resisting round steel wire. Where the floor meets the skirting leave the hardboard unpinned and edge with quadrant beading pinned to the skirting. To keep the new hardboard surface in good condition it should be sealed, then polished. Use a non-slip polish. If your floor is so uneven that it will not be possible to level it you can use soft fibre board as an underlay to the hardboard. This is resilient enough to compensate for unevenness in the floor. This method means raising the floor surface by about half an inch, so you will have to trim the bottoms of the doors slightly.

Concrete floors, which are often cracked and chipped by previous rough handling, can be renovated or covered up altogether. Armstrong's Floor Fill makes a good job of smoothing the floor. This consists of a paste and powder which are mixed together with or without the addition of wood shavings or sawdust to add bulk. Spread thinly over the floor, and more thickly in damaged places, it will put a new smooth surface on it. Alternatively, you can, of course, spread a new screed of cement over the surface.

For covering the floor, felt-backed

A coat of Liquid Lino floor paint makes an enduring new surface for an old quarry tile floor. Before painting, make the floor good with cement, and score to match the existing tiles. Leave the new cement for six months to dry thoroughly. Put on two coats of paint, and polish the surface when dry with a good wax polish to keep it looking at its best

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

continued from previous page

Vynoleum sheet vinyl flooring gives a slightly resilient surface which is pleasant to walk on. It makes a perfect covering for a slightly uneven floor, whether wood or concrete. It takes on the shape of the sub-floor without cracking. Don't use this if you suspect the floor of being damp: the felt backing may rot.

Worn out quarry tiles can be patched up in a similar way. On the previous page you can see a step-by-step face-lift of quarry tiles on an actual hall being treated with Liquid Lino floor paint. If the tiles are damaged, as well as colourless, you can mend them with cement and score the new cement in the same lines as the tiles. When they have been covered with a coat of paint the mended places will not show. New cement should be left for six months before painting.

Worn boards get a face-lift

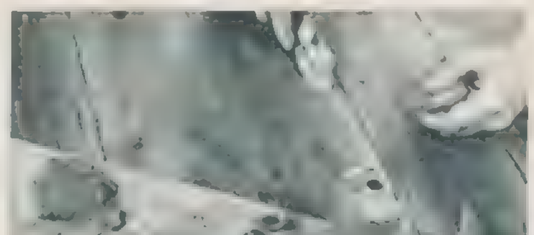
The first step is to prepare the floor surface: remove protruding carpet tacks and lino brads, replace any worn boards, and punch all nail heads down below the surface out of the way of the sanding machine

Fill very wide gaps between undamaged boards with fillets of timber which have been cut to fit. Plane these flush with the surface of the surrounding boards. Finish by sweeping or vacuuming the floor

Fit coarse grit paper to the sander, and operate diagonally across the boards both ways, then with the grain of the wood. Fit second and third grades of paper, and sand again with the grain of the wood

The machine does not reach quite to the skirting: scrape this area with a Skarsten scraper. Sand the whole floor with the finest grade paper with the grain, and finish the edges to match by hand or with a power tool

Apply Colron wood dye to the floor with a cloth. The twelve colours are intermixable so that you can make up practically any shade. If the boards have a naturally good colour, there is no need to dye them



Fill nail-holes and small defects with putty coloured with oil colour. Apply two coats of Ronseal with a cloth. Let the first dry for six hours, then rub down with fine steel wool. Finish with Ronuk Plastic Emulsion

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Aunt Edwina

continued from page 17

a profit from Aunt Edwina if she pulled through, refused to see a reporter who thought he might have an encouraging word to say about the author's fight.

A later inquiry at Anna Wiman's office received the reply: "Miss Wiman's solicitor says that it's Mr. Home's private battle. She does not wish to enter into it." Mr. Home's indecorous aunt was indeed causing embarrassment beyond the family circle.

Theatrical managements, agents and often stage artists are much opposed to authors replying to critics. Many of them believe that any skirmish will result in bad feeling which will manifest itself in future reviews.

But nobody could dissuade Home from speaking his mind.

Within the theatre the cast had rallied stoically to the side of the author, Henry Kendall, Cyril Raymond, another principal, and Miss Scott volunteered to take cuts in their fees, and actors and actresses helped with the business of pulling in customers.

Hilary Tindall, a gay, elegantly-proportioned girl who was making her first appearance on the West End stage, phoned everyone she knew who was likely to go to a theatre in the weeks ahead and asked them to visit Aunt Edwina.

Marina Martin, who plays a highly-strung Italian maid, recruited customers from her father's vacuum-flask business, while Gay Cameron, another young actress, left pamphlets in her hairdresser's *salon* at Berkeley Square.

By December there were even one or two crowded houses. Margaret Webster and Pamela Frankau, the writers, had dropped in—"somewhat apprehensively in view of the notices," says Miss Frankau, "but I certainly laughed a good deal." And Anna Russell, billed sweepingly in her own shows as "The funniest woman in the world," found Aunt Edwina very funny, if not an immediate rival.

On December 13, even Harold Hobson came close to flattering her in his *Sunday Times* review of another play.

Things were looking up, and on December 16 the play had its fiftieth performance. But the expected full houses at Christmas did not come . . . and Aunt Edwina left the Fortune Theatre.

William Douglas Home, playwright, idealist and fighter, went battling on.

"Aunt Edwina is not dead yet. My fight to save her is just beginning. I'm sure there's a lot of life left in Auntie yet."

THE END

CONTEMPT—1

Contempt is not to be despised. It may be borne with a calm and cool mind, but no man, by lifting his head high, can pretend that he does not perceive it.

Edmund Burke

It's just the job—plus perks

continued from page 19

who receive them exaggerate, the individual payment in the hope of encouraging the innocent to tip more lavishly than they intended to. At the same time, fear of the taxman leads them to underestimate the total.

Last July, however, Giovanni Caldera, who was in charge of the serving of Italian dishes in a Soho restaurant, gave some idea of the amounts involved. Giving evidence in court he admitted that his tips never came to less than £13 a week. Once they touched £28.

While many waiters make less than this, doormen at leading West End hotels do even better. Joseph Meyer, former hall-porter of Grosvenor House, left £19,500. Jimmy Stewart, of the Dorchester, left £16,000.

On a lower level, railway porters may make from £1 to £10 a week. Taxi-drivers may make £10 a week in London, £3 in the provinces.

Professional men also receive perks. A fashionable doctor receives substantial presents, especially from his wealthier women patients. Headmasters are frequently given houses with rates, heating and lighting found. Apart from the Easter collection, a clergyman can count on reduced fees if he sends his children to some private schools.

White-collar perk

Professional and white-collared workers are also the main recipients of perks which go not with jobs but with union cards. Since the war, nearly all the civil service, local government and professional unions have made agreements with retailers to supply their members with goods at discounts ranging from four to twenty-five per cent.

One civil service union issues to its members a confidential twenty-four page booklet listing hundreds of traders which have undertaken to supply its members with cut-price goods.

One small union has even gone so far as to run its own co-operative for members. By ordering directly from wholesalers, it is able to pass on to members the whole of the normal retail discount, less two and a half per cent for administrative expenses. It has a turnover of £30,000 a year.

Like other unions which run discount schemes, it asks its members to keep the details secret. It fears opposition from retailers who are losing trade and from manufacturers whose price-fixing agreements are being evaded.

That these fears are well-founded was shown when a member's wife went into a toyshop and asked the price of a toy with a well-known brand name. "My husband can get it cheaper than that," she boasted, when told. Pressed, she described the union's scheme to the assistant. The retailer complained to the wholesaler, who had also been supplying the union. Fearing further repercussions, he cut off the union's supplies instantly.

Over the years, the Inland Revenue has worked out a comprehensive policy on perks. With the sole exception of cash paid in lieu of miners' coal, all monetary extras are taxable.

Perks given in kind are not usually taxable. Nor are isolated presents which do not arise directly out of the job. By a special concession, the Inland Revenue does not tax luncheon vouchers up to a value of three shillings a day.

Perks are allowed for various reasons. Some, like miners' coal, were originally intended as part payment for the job. Others, especially small consumer goods, are given to discourage pilfering. Often perks are an inducement to attract scarce labour.

But many perks just grow up over the years and often the employer has no idea how much they are worth. One town, too small to run a salvage department, has long allowed its dustmen to pick over the rubbish they collect from bins. They sort it in a corporation shed while waiting for their trucks to unload, then sell it to scrap-dealers.

This town recently made an investigation into the whole working of its refuse department. It was astounded to find that the homely practice of "totting" brought each of its dustmen thirty shillings a week.

THE END

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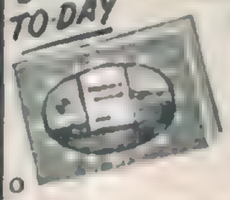

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Choose the right spot for your stay by the sea

by ELIZABETH NICHOLAS

THE holiday question so often asked is: "Where are you taking the family this year?"

And the answer, most likely, is: "Oh, to the sea. Nothing to touch it so far as the kids are concerned!"

No, there's nothing like the sea, whether it is smashing furiously in great thunderous waves, or lying smooth, still, and as polished as a silver plate in the haze of an August noon. There's nothing like it as a background to delight, when the children dig castles in the sand, scramble over the breakwaters and splash through the shallow waves while the grown-ups lie back at blissful ease, hats tipped over their noses, and listen to the call of the gulls.

How fortunate we are that, in Britain, we are always less than a hundred miles from the sea. Day in, day out, it laps around our island. The sea is no stranger, even to those who live inland.

Suit the family

But though we talk loosely of "going to the sea," we mean, more precisely, that we are going to the coast and, what is more, a certain point on the coast. The British coast, and that of western Europe, is infinite in its variety, so one should give some consideration to which kind would suit the family best.

Perfection for very small children is less perfect for teenagers, and vice versa. Toddlers, of course, are best suited by a wide, flat sandy beach, where at all times, except high tide, they can paddle around in absolute safety. Older children, though, especially those who can swim, find such a beach irksome; they have to wade half a mile before the water reaches their waists. (That goes for adults too!)

Again, older children delight in rocks that can be scrambled over, that form pools where shrimps may lurk, and where limpets cling. They love cliffs and huge boulders jutting into the sea. For the parents of small children, however, these far from adding an agreeable spice to life, are a constant menace.

Bear these points in mind then, when making your choice. There's no difficulty whatever in getting information if the resort is British. Just write to the publicity manager of the resort you have in mind, addressed c/o of the town hall (or the town clerk in the case of a small town which may not run to a publicity manager) and ask for a copy of the official guide.

Such a guide is packed full of detailed information and is, usually, very well illustrated. Having read it carefully, you should be able to form an opinion as to whether the resort in question would suit your own needs.

When it comes to places abroad the satisfactory choice of a seaside holiday spot can be rather more tricky. Here is some advice based on my experience.

For small children, the whole of the Belgian coast is perfect. It has plenty of safe, sandy beaches. For older children it is perfect too; the resorts offer a great range of amusements.

The famous seaside towns on the Dutch coast are the same; Noordwijk, for example, caters for all age groups.

Denmark, also, is splendid for the family holiday, for its shores are strung with towns and villages suited to children of every age. Norway is a marvellous country for older children, especially those who enjoy sailing, swimming, fishing and climbing.

As far as France is concerned, Brittany is an obvious choice, and I would recommend, too, the long, flat coastline south of Bordeaux, where there are smooth sands and safe bathing. Archachon would be an excellent centre.

I also suggest San Sebastian or Santander on the Atlantic coast of Spain. But the south of Spain is, I think, too hot for young children in mid-summer.

At the risk of making myself unpopular, I must say that I think the whole Mediterranean coast is a delight best left untasted until children's ages have reached double figures. The very young can be upset by violent changes in food and temperature.

To sum up: Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, the Channel and Atlantic coasts of France offer splendid scope for family seaside holidays.

Study the form

I suggest you tackle the question of precisely which place to choose in this way. Study the advertisements; write to two or three likely agents for their brochures and when, having read these, you have picked a resort that sounds just what you want, write to the national tourist office in London of the country concerned for an illustrated leaflet that describes it in detail.

You should then be able to come to a firm decision. All that remains to be done is to write off to the agent and ask him to make the necessary arrangements.

A word of warning. If you are taking your holiday at the end of July or in August, you have no time to lose; get cracking.

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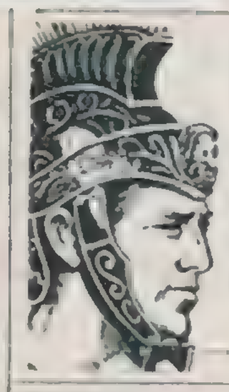

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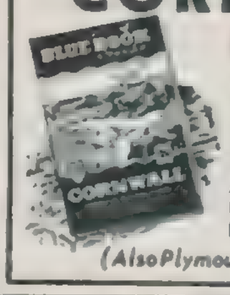

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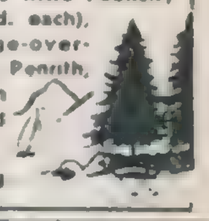

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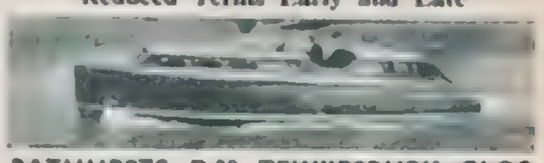

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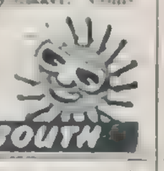

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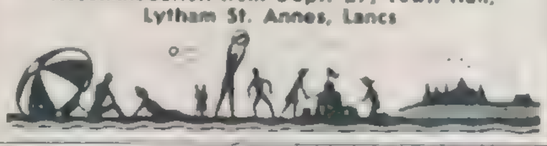

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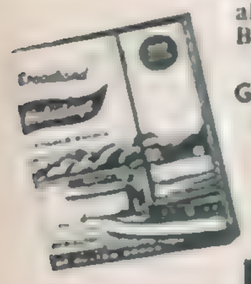

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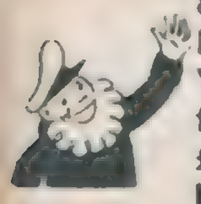

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Crocodile trader

continued from page 8

months ago a white hunter wound this hippo. Since then it kill three men."

"You blithering idiot!" Graham shouted at him. "Why didn't you warn us before?"

"Because, if I tell, you no go shoot crocodiles, and my people no eat," was the naive reply.

The words had hardly been spoken before the hippo blew and submerged. I groaned aloud. Angry hippo always submerge when coming in for an attack.

When the hippo surfaced, less than ten yards astern, Graham fixed it in an unwavering beam. The fellow had iron nerves. Not so Sanganga, who began to jabber like a baboon.

Being able to see the brute made me feel better. At least we knew where the enemy was. "Bring her round and make for the gap," I ordered.

Sanganga's eyes rolled, the whites flashing in abject terror, but he showed no signs of having heard. "Bring her round and head for the gap or I'll brain you," I stammered, raising my rifle like a club above my head.

With a bleat of fear, he obeyed.

Hippo are reputed to be slow and cumbersome and I sincerely hoped that this was true as we shot for the gap.

Surprised by this change of direction, the hippo paused. Meantime Graham held the head in an unfaltering beam of light, confusing the brute. And, for good measure we shouted and yelled to high heaven.

We were well ahead before the hippo appreciated that we had edged between it and the channel and, with a frustrated blowing, came after us on the surface. Hippos slow in water? Pure fallacy! We had not a hope of keeping our distance. Sanganga gave it all he'd got, but the gap between us shrunk by the second, and then the brute submerged again.

Light flickered nervously on empty water and our shouting died.

To my horror, I suddenly saw Graham shoot into the air and plummet down towards the canoe's rising stern, right alongside the hippo's head. On rising, the brute had tossed the rear of the canoe with its head. Now, mouth agape, it charged in to complete our destruction. Aiming carefully I fired into that cavernous mouth.

The hippo submerged in a welter of foam, causing the canoe to bob and buckle.

"On, Sanganga, on!" I yelled.

Every local man, woman and child awaited us on the bank. Hearing shouts, followed by a shot and silence, they presumed us lost. It was with difficulty that they were convinced that we were indeed flesh and blood and not spooks arisen from the river.

Probed with harpoon

Before turning in we arranged for a canoe on the morrow so that the wounded hippo could be sought out. It would be silly to get away with poaching crocodiles and land up charged with shooting hippo wrongfully. We just had to get that brute.

Next morning we were on the water before sunrise, probing about with an eight-foot harpoon, bound on to a paddle blade, but with a total lack of success. Nor was there any sign of the beast on the surface, yet hippo have to rise every few minutes to breathe.

Two hours were wasted before we gave up to attend to the skinning. This task completed, we walked back to Mambova with our trophies in the afternoon and disposed of these to a local trader, an Indian.

He paid us out thirty-odd pounds, probably making a fair turn on the deal, but it saved us a trip to Livingstone and appearing in public with our spoils, right under the eye of game-warden Ross. Naturally we confessed our predicament to the Indian and he proved most obliging and helpful about it all. We were to learn why in due course.

Having decided to test out the main river we hired a boat from the Indian, complete with outboard engine. Sanganga volunteered to act as guide. "Hippo and crocs, if die, float soon," he said. "Tonight we shoot river from opposite my kraal right down to Mambova. Tomorrow go back to pool and find dead floating." It sounded simple and we decided to let him have his way.

Mambova is situated well back from the river at the head of a swamp and through this swamp innumerable channels run. Sanganga assured us that he knew each and every channel but, before committing ourselves to his care, we decided to investigate these for ourselves. It would be dark when we returned from our expedition and one could easily get lost in such a maze. Sanganga negotiated the tortuous channels with ease, but we spent some time checking landmarks just in case.

The thrill of the chase was upon us when we returned to Mambova, impatient for nightfall.

As soon as it was dark we went seven miles upstream and reached a point directly opposite Sanganga's kraal and the hippo pool; then we turned. Cutting the engine, we began to drift downstream with the current.

Without the engine the silence of the bush became more pronounced. The plop of leaping fish and the scolding of baboons accentuated rather than pierced the silence. Natives regard the Zambesi as a Being, a somnolent

CONTEMPT—2

Nothing is so contemptible as habitual contempt.

E. L. Magoon

giant . . . lazy, but full of latent power. Now I knew why. The Zambesi was alive; a brooding menace.

We must have gone three miles when, right ahead, I spotted a pall of mist, low upon the water: "Night fog," Graham suggested, but a faint scent drifting to my nostrils brought uneasiness, then outright panic. We were drifting into a pall of smoke; ahead was a bush fire, and bush fires are the deadliest scourge of the veld.

Switching on the engine we headed into the smoke and soon were blanketed by choking fumes. And now we could hear fire licking through the reeds, right down to the water's edge.

We could see nothing and breathing was agony. Our eyes smarted and ran. The air was laden with burning smuts.

We had covered several miles before it dawned on us that we were not going to break through the fire. It was being carried downstream by the evening breeze and this breeze was freshening. Approximately two miles ahead lay Mambova, if our calculations were anything like accurate . . . and at Mambova we had to locate the turn-off channel to get safely home.

Less than a quarter of a mile beyond Mambova are rapids.

I suggested hugging the bank and to this Graham agreed.

We edged along, Graham leaning over the side, keeping a sharp look-out for rocks. Even so, we had not gone far before the bows tilted in the air and the whole boat heeled over. Switching off I discovered that we were firmly perched on a sandbank.

We clambered into the water and pushed the boat clear.

After striking several more sandbanks we decided to return to midstream and trust to luck, keeping the engine running. There, our other fears returned. Where was Mambova and how far ahead were the rapids?

I felt we must be close upon them, and switched off. No silence greeted our ears, only a booming roar. The rapids were right ahead.

Sanganga squealed. Graham leaped for the stern and the starting-rope, but he hadn't a chance; already I was tugging at it furiously. Naturally, as always happens on such occasions, the darned thing wouldn't fire and now our bow began to swing round, bringing us broadside on to the current.

"Oars!" I yelled, rewinding furiously.

"You bloody fool, there *aren't* any oars!" Graham shouted back. Now I remembered; before leaving Mambova I had unshipped the oars to give us more moving room when landing crocs.

Closing my eyes, I tugged at the starting-rope, landing on my backside as it flew off, but that I did not mind. The engine coughed, spluttered and settled down to an even beat. Putting the rudder hard over I opened the throttle, the propeller bit in and we were under way again.

Stifled by smoke

A few minutes later we located a channel and headed in confidently. The fire had not reached this point, but the smoke was denser than ever. Graham and I took it in turns to lie on the thwarts in search of breathable air and to bathe our smarting eyes with water. Sanganga was a permanent resident there, gasping like a newly landed fish.

We messed about, nosing in and out and round about, but could not locate a landmark. There was nothing for it but to pull in to the bank, tie up and spend the night as best we could.

We huddled down to await the morning. . . .

Sore-eyed and wretched we watched dawn creep up the eastern sky. Also we saw something else—Mambova directly ahead. We had been in the correct channel all the time!

We edged in at slowest possible speed, eager that none should witness our discomfiture. Spending a night in purgatory and less than a hundred yards from home! Beaching the boat we crept to our tent and bed, convinced that chasing rogue hippo later in the day would be a pleasant change after what we had just been through.

We awoke to find it early afternoon, so, after a meal, we returned the boat and set off through the bush to Sanganga's kraal. The journey took slightly less than two hours and, having dumped our kit, we took to the water in search of the wounded hippo.

We did not have to look far. It floated on its back in the centre of the pool, dead. I manoeuvred alongside so that we could turn the carcass over; we had to be certain that it had been shot before and that we had killed a rogue.

Through the jaw was a festering bullet wound of considerable age. The poor brute had been grievously injured and the fly-blown wound must have caused great suffering, until my bullet had put an end to its misery.

During the next few days life settled into a set routine, a congenial existence, although catches fell away as time passed. Crocs may have a limited brain, but had sufficient intelligence to become increasingly wary and sense that night was the time of death. In fact, many appeared to have vacated the area.

We continued to sell our skins to the Indian and living was easy and worth while. Work only commenced at sunset and we normally returned from a shoot in ample time for a decent night's rest, prior to commencing skinning in the morning. There was time to bask in the sun, time to tour the countryside, time to live without haste or flurry. We visited Katombora and other places of interest, but nevertheless a restlessness grew in us, an urge to push on and exploit the potential of the Njoko.

A decision was finally forced upon us. We were lounging at Mambova, determining whether to sell our latest skins to the Indian or whether to take a chance and take them direct to Livingstone for a better price, when a strange truck drew up in a cloud of dust.

"That's Ross," whispered Graham, as a tall figure alighted and sauntered towards us. Uneasily we watched his approach.

"You fellows shooting crocs?"

"I'll do the talking," I whispered to Graham. The situation was delicate and Graham was no diplomat. Already I could see him bridling.

I turned on my most winning smile. "We've been trying our luck, Mr. Ross. Very amateurish by your standards, I fear."

"So you know me?"

"Sure, you were pointed out to us in Livingstone." I decided not to mention the circumstances in which this happened, but couldn't resist adding, tongue in cheek: "Pity you can't spare us a day or two."

Dead serious, he replied: "I'd have liked to, but that's all out now. I cannot assist you. That's the worst of being a ranger. Duty, you know."

Tricked by dealer

I wanted to laugh, but the situation did not warrant laughter. Ross took himself seriously; so must we. "Quite, quite . . ." I said, not knowing what to say next.

"Oh, so you know, do you? No more shooting as from tomorrow. Special permission required to shoot crocodiles as from December 31, 1956." Ross drew himself up and pursed his lips. "Otherwise. . . ."

With a sound sense of the dramatic he left the sentence unfinished.

So we had *not* been poaching! The Indian dealer had caught us with a vengeance! Failure to read the press thoroughly and make a few definite inquiries had cost us over £100.

Desultory conversation followed, then our warden friend moved off in

Helping Hands

"I'll call you if I need you"

"Drinks in the sideboard, chaps—I'll lay on some food!"

another dust-cloud, assuring us that skins on hand could be sold after December 31.

"That's that," grated Graham, kicking an empty tin.

It was a few seconds before I appreciated the reason for this ill-humour. So pleased had I been at our lucky escape that I had overlooked the implications. Shooting here was out.

We were busy packing next day at Mambova when another strange vehicle, a jeep this time, rolled up and out stepped a chunky, swarthy type. He was dressed in gaberdine, an unheard-of attire for the Rhodesian bush, and had thick-lensed glasses perched firmly on his nose.

Spectacles sauntered over. "Say, in the name of holy mackerel, what gives here?" The accent was unmistakable; we were in the presence of the almighty dollar. We explained our predicament.

"Now, that sure is fine," was the disconcerting reply.

"I'm glad you think so." Graham sounded annoyed.

The American smiled, a tight little smile, devoid of humour. "The name's Jones. Arthur Jones," he offered. "Say," he went on, "I could use a couple of fellas like you."

"What's the job?" Graham demanded.

"Collecting live crocodiles for a reptile jungle in the States. African crocodiles. I've already done one trip collecting these in the Congo."

"Live crocodiles!" I stuttered, wondering who was mad.

"Sure, and the bigger the better." Jones's glance embraced Horace and our ramshackle hut. "Ross told me about you guys. What about it? And I could use that jalopy as well."

Things were moving much too fast for our slow Rhodesian ways. Mistaking our look for indecision he added: "I reckon on a three-month trip up the Caprivi Strip, then the catch'll have to be gotten back home. That'll mean a trip to the States for you fellas. Half-fare paid and a salary thrown in."

'It's a deal . . .'

"It's a deal," we cried jubilantly. A trip to America was worth working for. America! Country of go-getters and massive enterprise. It was the chance of a lifetime. "Can we keep on our bearer, Sanganga?" Graham inquired. (This was a cunning move; Sanganga would be useful to help us out with the work.)

Jones waved a magnanimous hand. "Sure, keep the fella."

We felt breathless as facts and figures were drawled into our ears, but let most of these slip out again. This was our first contact with Yankee bustle. We were far too impressed to worry over such mundane matters as pay.

Jones booked us in at a posh Livingstone hotel and left us to our own devices. Next afternoon Jones came back in top form. Accompanied by a South African Government official, he had flown over the area, which exceeded expectations. He had pin-pointed a camp site and all was under control.

However, there was a snag. An escort of African police were to be attached to the expedition, to see that we did not get lost and to ensure that there was no wanton destruction of crocodiles. We had official blessing to remove live crocs without number, but shooting the species was banned. This was a nasty blow; we had decided that our perks would come from shooting.

Over the inevitable "coke" Jones elaborated and we found ourselves elevated from the cult of shillings to that of dollars, and dollars were never mentioned in lesser denominations than thousands; readily we adjusted ourselves to this peculiarity. Undoubtedly things were going to be done on a large scale.

No fear of flood

We hired a forty-foot barge with two outboard engines; also a fifteen-foot boat with a four and a half horse-power engine for lake work.

"I sure reckon these engines'll develop enough power to work up against your floods," Jones commented sarcastically. We had been trying to warn him against pending rain and flood, but this was the only result.

The boat side attended to, Jones went on a buying spree. A jeep was purchased, tarpaulins, rolls of quarter-inch wire cable for snare construction and enough rope to tie up the British Merchant Navy. Several rifles for shooting meat as bait were also procured, all in the region of $300. We thought in dollars now!

A farmer near Livingstone named Krantz supplied three trucks and driver to take our gear to Mambova. Word of our project had got around and we reached Mambova to find the population gathered on the quay to greet us and have a first-hand look at the lunatics and their paraphernalia.

The barge loaded, Jones turned to a knot of white settlers, a white oasis in a sea of black: "Say, any of you guys care to recommend three boys for jobs?" he drawled.

A burly Dutchman stepped forward and indicated three natives, assuring us in very broken English that these boys knew the river and that one, Dumbie, a deaf mute, was definitely the best boy for our purpose.

Innocently I demanded why. The Boer commented succinctly that Dumbie would be unable to complain when he knew what we were about!

Clumsily we cast off, I for one very glad to see the last of Mambova.

River navigation is a hazardous occupation and, despite Dumbie being a useful perquisite, we found ourselves aground times without number. Sandbanks dotted the river and our deep laden barge appeared to have a nodding acquaintance with each and every one. It was a heart-breaking business.

It took three hours to reach our point of disembarkation; low flat land, heavily grassed. Loading, with some thirty willing helpers, had been child's play, but for six of us off-loading was a ghastly task. There was no sign of the police and Jones, ever impatient, decided to go it alone.

We sweated and toiled unceasingly. That was bad enough, but worse was the reflection that Jones was asking for trouble. We were going to camp in the lowest part of the river. And the Zambesi is a capricious lady, capable of rising five feet in nearly as many hours.

A five-foot rise would put us under water, but Jones would not be convinced of this.

Nightmare journey

Everything off-loaded from the big barge, which was to remain anchored on the river, I began to look around for a suitable camping spot, bearing in mind that this must be near an ant-hill or a clay deposit. Such materials are essential for the making of bricks, for was Jones not going to build a river-bed hut so that at least we could drown in comfort when the river flooded?

Jones watched in silence for a few minutes then burst out: "Say, fella, we sure ain't camping here. Our site's eleven miles inland, right by the lakes."

"Eleven miles inland!" I protested, feeling for a cigarette.

"That's right. We'll use the jeep for transporting stuff from camp to the river, crocodiles mostly. The barge'll take them to Mambova and from Mambova I'll fix transport on to Livingstone and the main depot at Krantz's farm."

Words failed me. The man *was* mad! That distance inland we would not stand a chance when the river came up, and the Zambesi can rise without any rain falling in the immediate vicinity. More often than not floods start higher up. Eleven miles inland the first indication of trouble that we were likely to receive would be an avalanche of water, sweeping us to eternity.

The journey was a nightmare. Grass-covered holes were scattered all over the place, impossible to see until hit. It took us the best part of two hours to do the trip, but eventually a temporary camp was constructed and, the following morning, Graham and I returned to Mambova for the balance of our equipment.

"Come, Sanganga, jump aboard," I shouted when all had been loaded. But Sanganga shook his head and shuffled his toes in the sand.

"Come on, man, we haven't all day," I grated.

Then the truth came out.

"Men tell me that you seek to take live crocodiles from the water, and to carry them to a strange land," Sanganga explained. "I cannot help you to do this. Your religion also believes that the soul lives on. We share that belief, and Nyami-Nyami has told us that souls leave the dead to find a temporary habitat in animals until a new son is born. It is possible that many dead have sought temporary refuge in the bodies of the reptiles. Who can say? So I cannot take a chance."

Living 'sandbanks'

With no alternative but to leave Sanganga behind, we reached camp in the early afternoon, and after assisting in getting things ship-shape, set off to examine our hunting grounds.

Moving downlake we passed many sandbanks, grey against the glittering waters. As I watched, one of these appeared to move. I rubbed my eyes and looked again. It *was moving*. Then I got it; every sandbank was moving. All were alive with crocs basking in the sun.

We edged towards a sandbank and Jones pointed excitedly. "Crocodile slides. That's the place for the snares." Slides was an apt name for the indentations leading from the water to the sandbank. Apparently crocodiles are

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Crocodile trader

continued from previous page

creatures of habit, leaving and entering water at the same point each time.

Back in camp again, we ate well, then sat around under mosquito-nets and, liberally sprinkled with mosquito repellent, talked of this and that while idly listening to the distant murmur of the river. We had not a care in the world, apart from mosquitoes, and the occasional hippopotamus which rose from the lake to emit unencouraging noises. Hippo took unkindly to this intrusion.

Jones was a great man for facts and figures. Also, obviously, he entertained no doubts about the success of the venture. Such confidence caused our imaginations to soar. We had visions of returning to Bulawayo successful and wealthy men.

I awoke to a dull dawn. Already, Jones was up and about. Snares were being constructed on the same principle as ordinary rabbit snares, the only difference being that these were intended for tethering Zambesi saurians!

After breakfast we set out to shoot meat for bait and, travelling in the jeep, soon had three buck, enough for our immediate requirements.

En route to camp, after careful scrutiny of the terrain, Jones decided to snare the large lake first; time permitting, the others could be worked later.

Unfortunately we found that all the slides were on open ground and, without any handy trees to anchor our snares. Things appeared to have reached an impasse, but they had not. Jones had prepared for this and every contingency.

I had wondered why six shovels were always carried in the boat . . . now I found out. Graham, Dumbie, and I were handed shovels and ordered to dig.

There was another chore, an easy one, and this Jones, very gallantly, elected to do himself. The bait was dipped in water and dragged back slowly over the slide, through the noose, and deposited a little beyond. The idea being, the crocodile would follow the meat-scent right up to, and through, the snare.

Jones appeared confident that the crocodiles would indeed follow the meat-scent from the pool, thrust through the noose, grab the meat and, when retreating, draw the snare tight. He assured us that it was very simple, and easy as snaring rabbits.

"The only difference being that crocodiles are not rabbits, not by a long chalk," Graham pointed out in quiet and tolerant tones.

Victory for Jones

Kicking off my shoes I undressed and turned in for an early night.

It seemed I had hardly slept before I was being roughly shaken. "Half-four, and time for work," Jones called cheerfully. He routed out Dumbie and led the way to the water, whistling tonelessly.

It was dark and cold on the water.

Switching on the light, I soon picked up the first trap. It was empty, but the meat had gone. The second snare had been upset, and here the meat was also gone. Nudging me in the ribs, Graham muttered: "Just what I expected. Who the hell ever heard of snaring crocodiles?" Just then my light picked up the third snare, also empty, but again the meat had gone. It looked as if Graham was right . . . Jones had backed a loser.

Picking up the fourth trap in the beam I nearly dropped the light. A crocodile was ensnared, and it was no baby. The brute was a good eight feet. Cable was wound round and round its chest and firmly embedded behind the front legs.

Jones executed a victory dance in the stern and in seconds we had joined in, laughing and slapping each other on the back—all of us save Dumbie, who emitted most blood-curdling squeals, while grinning fit to split his face.

"I'll say again I knew it had to work," crowed Jones. "Soon as a crocodile grabs meat it retreats backwards. That's the way prey is dragged to the water, and that's what I banked on. Moving forward, it may lift its feet and miss a snare, but slithering back the feet will never leave the ground. Our snares must get them every time."

I felt a tinge of admiration, and not for the first time. One could learn a lot from Jones.

We pulled into the bank and Jones jumped ashore, camera in hand. "This'll make them stare. This'll be front page news back home," he shot at us as the camera whirred and Jones took picture after picture of the wretched saurian.

Graham and I were delighted with this pantomime, but not so the crocodile. It thrashed about with its tail, striking the ground dull thuds in a demonstration of what it could do. I kept my distance, but was near enough to hear Jones remark: "Easy, now. A few more minutes and we'll get it aboard."

He scrutinized our captive. "Look! He's tied himself up real nice already."

Certainly the crocodile was tied up in knots and, apparently, Jones had been waiting for just this to happen. Like an eel on a hook, the crocodile had wriggled and turned, rolling over and over, and winding the cable about its body until now it was trussed up like a turkey.

He returned to the boat and cut off a piece of rope, lengths of which were lying coiled in the bottom of the craft. Taking a portion some fifteen feet long, he made a slip knot and fashioned a lasso. We blinked as, lasso in hand, he advanced upon the saurian and began to tickle its snout with the loose end of rope.

Rhodesia is a pretty easy-going country where a man can get away with most things, but there are limits, and tickling a live crocodile on the snout is exceeding these limits. The brute whirled, as far as it was able to whirl, and snapped viciously.

We watched enthralled as every time the rope touched snout the jaws snapped on vacant air, but the longer we watched the more unhappy we felt about the future. Anything Jones did we'd to do later, if he still lived, and we weren't quite callous enough to wish for his demise.

Nauseating stench

However, after some time the pattern changed, and no longer did the crocodile snap at the offending rope. Then, to further illustrate its complete indifference, it blew wind in dragon snorts. The stench was nauseating.

The crocodile inert, Jones bestrode the recumbent reptile and moved cautiously towards its head, continuing the teasing process with the rope.

Repeat performances, however intriguing the original, tend to bore, and I had begun to wonder what all this was leading up to when the crocodile gave vent to a prolonged belch. The moment Jones had been waiting for. Like a flash he dropped the noose over the top jaw, manoeuvred it back over the large top molars, and quickly hauled it tight.

Jones began the whole process again, continuing until he managed to get a half hitch round the lower jaw. Then, in a second, the jaws were clamped tight. Adding a few more half hitches, for strengthening, he drew the whole thing tight. The crocodile's most lethal weapon was out of action.

Dumbie clapped in approbation, Graham and I joined in. It was fantastic.

Jones bowed. Then fetching a piece of sacking from the boat he soaked it in water, wrung it out, and began to belabour the unhappy crocodile over snout and eyes with it, firmly retaining his grip on the loose end of the snout binding rope with his free hand.

We watched the matador act in silence and, here again, the artfulness of Jones was soon apparent. Each time the sacking fell, should the crocodile play up, Jones would jerk on the rope, pulling back its head in the most painful manner. However, should the croc lie quiet, and after a few minutes it did so with increasing frequency, Jones left the rope slack and, apart from a flick of sacking, the brute suffered no inconvenience at all.

Soon its struggles ceased, and it lay supine under the dripping sack. Grunting in satisfaction, Jones once more climbed astride the reptile and moved slowly up its back until he was standing, legs apart, just behind its neck. Here, rope in hand, he knelt down, looked up at me and said: "Walk kind o' slowly until you're standing directly in front of its head."

When he was finally satisfied that I was in the correct position, Jones levered up the head, and that brought the crocodile to life. I leaped back and, at the same moment, observed Jones tossed into the air. I stumbled and fell, but scrambled to my feet in time to see Jones, who had tenaciously retained his grip on the rope, pull up short in the midst of an intricate airborne movement and fall full length across the crocodile's body, still grasping the rope.

Blindfolded croc

Soon the crocodile again relaxed, the wet sacking draped over its head. "Now, soon as I get the head up, lash the sacking around and tie it tight with this loose end, but don't use all the rope. Keep a few feet spare," Jones ordered, indicating the levering rope in his hands.

Slowly the head came up. I took a deep breath, knelt down—easier to get on with the job in that position, and also the attitude of prayer—tucked the sacking round, grabbed the rope, made a few half-hitches, and dragged the whole thing tight.

The crocodile remained as peaceful as a cooing dove.

"I'll say it sure is just a crocodile," breathed Jones. "Soon as the eyes are covered they're quiet as mice." He took up the loose end of rope and examined it critically. "Reckon it will do. Always leave eighteen inches or so spare, it's needed later."

I wondered why, but was not left long in doubt. Jones made another trip to the boat and collected more rope. The wretched and listless crocodile was bound in this like an Egyptian mummy.

I sighed with relief. The crocodile no longer looked dangerous. Things had gone much better than expected, but this happy mood was short-lived.

"Now for the critical part of the operation," drawled Jones, bustling forward, wire-cutters in hand.

We groaned. His intent was all too obvious: to cut the mooring-cable. Tethered, the crocodile's area of operations was limited but, cut loose, anything might happen.

The brute had full use of its legs and tail, and well I knew what a croc tail could do. One flick can knock a three hundred pound heifer into the water.

Unhappily I awaited the outcome.

© *Rory Macaulay, 1960*

NEXT WEEK: We learn to feed hungry crocodiles—by hand

"Crocodile Trader" is to be published as a book by Jarrolds in March at 18s.

Everybody's Puzzling

QUIZZLE

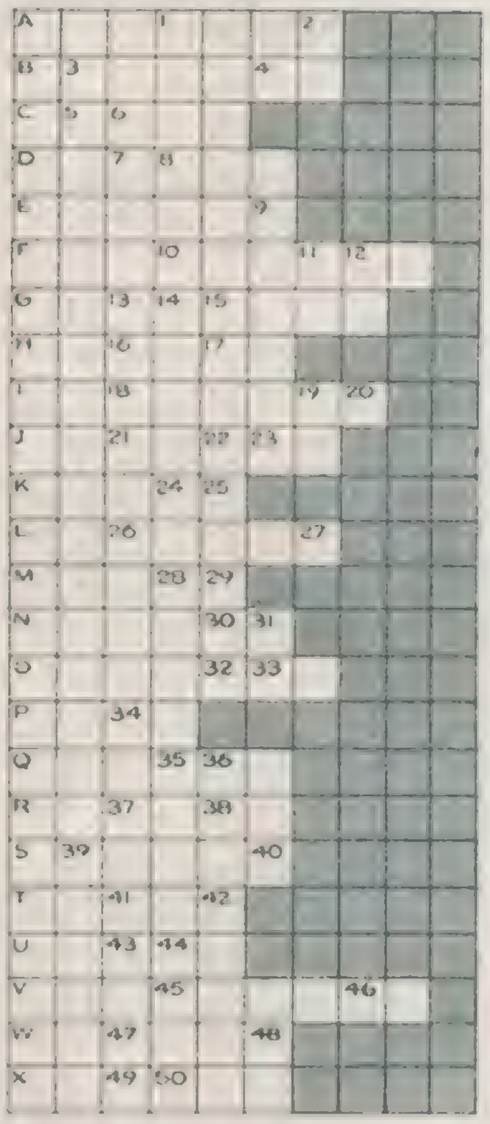
The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

CLUE DOWN

A. So the Hydra may have thought, at a modest estimate! (3, 5, 3, 6, 4, 3).

CLUES ACROSS

A. To divide into three parts.
B. A writ for arresting a person.
C. Hatred.
D. Shed for aircraft.
E. To shun.
F. Repugnance.
G. Something forsaken.
H. Plaster used for coating walls.
I. A type of well.
J. Minute aquatic animal of wheel formation.
K. An ant.
L. To fascinate or charm.
M. A young eel.
N. Small tower.
O. The windpipe.
P. Mediterranean island to which Napoleon was exiled in 1814.
Q. Used for packing the charge of a firearm.
R. Russian three-horse vehicle.
S. Hero of play by Flecker.
T. Tree related to the birches.
U. Artless and ingenuous.
V. Village near Newcastle where Scots defeated Percy Hotspur in 1388.
W. Quick and active.
X. Cathedral city and county town of Devonshire.



BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

Loxwood Lane, part of a new housing estate, is being developed with a row of 11 detached houses along one side. The houses are numbered consecutively, and each is of individual design. The builder has decided that the centre one—No. 6—will be the best and most expensive. No. 5 will cost £100 less than No. 6; No. 4 will cost £100 less than No. 5, and so on, each house down to No. 1 being £100 cheaper than its next higher number. With regard to the numbers higher than No. 6, however, the values will decrease by £150 for each house—i.e., No. 7 will be £150 less than No. 6; No. 8 will be £150 less than No. 7, and so on.

The total price of the 11 houses will be £29,250.

How much is the builder charging for No. 6?

NOW TURN TO PAGE 35 FOR THE ANSWERS

"I'll bet you thought you'd forgotten my birthday"

Pistols for two

continued from page 6

him and sobbing on his shoulders. "It's Morrison! He went to the window to wave you goodbye—three stories up! He leaned right over the sill to watch you round the corner and he fe-fell out!"

"The major was horrified. "Morrison! My only son! Is he. . . ."

"Horribly injured," said his wife, through her sobs. "Three stories, smash on the cobble stones! And calling for his father!"

"He's alive, though? He. . . ."

"Alive, yes," said Mrs. Fenning. "But for how long Heaven knows. Oh George, do come at once. Doctor Carraway's there, and I've sent for Aunt Rose, and—oh, if you could only see the poor lamb," she cried to the other men standing beside her husband, "and him only nine years old."

"Morrison," groaned the major, staring around distraught. . . .

Michael was deeply shocked. "My dear sir," he said, "you must go at once! Go to your son—I pray you find him better than you dare hope. Go at once. Any time will do for our business!"

The major seized Michael's hand and wrung it; he said no word but leaped into the chaise.

"Damned tiresome thing," said one of the seconds peevishly. "What a confounded waste of time!"

Michael felt very tired. He left the seconds to stroll across the grass to where the vehicles had been left in the lane and sat on a hedge-gap gate. The sunshine was gaining warmth; how good it felt on one's skin. Nothing made one appreciate life more than a whiff of the fear of death.

CONTEMPT—3

We cannot get angry with men if we despise them.

Mussolini

It was only then that he realized that the second woman who had arrived with Mrs. Fenning had not left with her. Amy Dunn was standing before him, hanging her head a little and looking up from under her eyebrows.

The very sight of her made Michael suspicious.

"Dunn!" he exclaimed. "Where have you sprung from, I wonder? Tell me, will young Fenning die?"

"Who can tell, sir?" Amy Dunn said. "He's abed, bandaged from head to foot—though what's under the bandages I couldn't say; and groaning terrible—at least, whenever he hears somebody coming to the door."

"I thought so. He isn't hurt at all."

"If he were, sir, do you think any mother would leave him for a moment, even if her husband were duelling?"

"But his bandages. . . ."

"Oh, just in case any of the seconds insisted on seeing him; that's all."

"So you and Mrs. Fenning. . . . But what's the major going to say?"

"He's got nothing to find out."

"What? You mean he's a party to this fraud? Why dammit, Dunn, the man's a coward!"

"Oh, sir."

"Well, yes," said Michael, "I know what you mean—but after all he is a soldier and I'm not. Just a bare-faced fraud, and I never dreamed for one moment. . . . Dunn, how did you manage it?"

Amy Dunn said: "Well, sir, when I first saw Major Fenning, something about him made me think he was a married man and made me guess what sort of a woman his wife might be. And I thought if I could see her. . . ."

"I remember you asked me for the address. And so you saw her and. . . ."

"Yes, sir," answered Dunn, "I saw her and I told her a great many terrible lies for which I hope I may be forgiven."

"You did, did you?"

"I talked to her about the duel; and I told her you were a perfect dead shot and had killed three men in the West Indies and two in Ireland. In Jamaica they called you Barlow the Butcher. Why, even Lord Damson had made you an abject apology rather than fight."

"You won't ever be forgiven for lies like that, Dunn. Not by me. Barlow the Butcher, indeed!"

"I'm very sorry, sir," said Dunn contritely. "But it worked, at least. Mrs. Fenning has influence in her home and she used it. And the major didn't seem half so keen, all of a sudden, when he heard about it. And as they'd somehow taken me into their confidence—well, there I was again, sir."

Michael looked at her keenly. "I wonder why everyone takes you into their confidence, Dunn?" he said. "But how do you mean, there you were again?"

"Well, you see, I was being asked all over again to avoid bloodshed without loss of honour. Of course I couldn't possibly say you had the same idea; oh, dear, no. And it couldn't be another hunting accident. I think the little boy lying there calling for his father was rather good, don't you, sir? Excuse me; it's so affecting I can't help crying a little."

"It was unanswerable," agreed Michael, "but too damn harrowing by half. Well, Dunn, let's hope the end justifies the means. I dare say you've saved my life. My honour, too. Even Miss Judith can't. . . ."

"Oh, dear!" cried Dunn. "Oh, good heavens! I forgot to tell you!"

"Forgot? Forgot to tell me what?"

"Oh, dear, sir," said Dunn, "I'm

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Not that there's anything new about this. Prices have always varied for things made from traditional materials, too. So our advice is simply to shop as you have always done. Go to a shop you trust. Look for the makers' names you know. And see your money buy more value when you choose things made with Acrilan.

Pistols for two

continued from page 33

terribly sorry to have to tell you at all, but I think you should know. I understand Miss Judith intends to marry Mr. Thomas Swann, sir."

"She'll what! Marry Tom Swann!" Michael shouted. "The pair of them loll about there in Hertfordshire not caring whether I get a bullet in my windpipe or not, and then you tell me.... Dunn," he said fiercely, "this was *your* doing! You packed her off to see Tom!"

"Oh, sir! How can you. ... ."

"That's right," Michael went on, "*you* did this. You didn't approve of my marrying Judith at all."

"Well, sir," answered Dunn, "you know no man's a hero to his valet, and that's even more the case when it comes to ladies and ladies' maids. If I must say so, I never did think she was quite right for you; I mean. . . ."

"How dare you!" thundered Michael. "How dare you presume to approve or not to approve? You seem to forget your position. I never heard such outrageous impertinence!"

"I'm very sorry, sir," said Dunn meekly.

"So you ought to be."

"Yes, sir."

"If I were ever going to speak to Miss Judith again—and I'm not—I should insist that she dismissed you."

"I've left her, sir, anyway. I don't like ladies who break their word."

Michael looked hard at Amy Dunn again. "You seem to have unusually strong views on what is becoming for ladies," he said. "That's very interesting. You say Miss Judith isn't right for me—and I'm now inclined to believe you. But then, who is? Have you any views on that subject? Who is right for me? Lady Parsley?"

"Heaven forbid, sir!"

"Then who?"

"Oh, sir, how should I know?"

"I'll wager you *do* know," said Michael. "You're a witch, Dunn; you must have sold your soul to the devil, or something. You can see farther inside people than most of us. Come now; help a young man who is desperately in need of advice. Who is right for me?"

"You're being ridiculous, sir," said Dunn, with a little more spirit. "It isn't a joke, and you mustn't speak to me like that, even if I am only a servant. Sold my soul to the devil indeed! The very idea!"

"Just gaze into your crystal," Michael went on. "Conjure up those spirits from the misty deep! Tell me, Dunn, I command you; who *is* right for me?"

"Mr. Barlow, I. . . ."

"It wouldn't, by any chance," persisted Michael, who was seeing farther into people himself than usual that morning, "it wouldn't by any extraordinary coincidence—it couldn't possibly be—a maid who doesn't know her proper station, a scheming dark-eyed witch of a lady's-lass called something-or-other Dunn? Would it now?"

Amy Dunn coloured, tried to reply, thought better of it. Instead she turned on her heel and made away from him rapidly across the common.

"Oh, no!" cried Michael, "you don't get away from Butcher Barlow as easily as that!"

He leaped from the gate, caught her up in two strides and swung her into his arms. . . ."

They spent the rest of that morning there, long after the seconds had driven off, while the sun rose higher and grew hotter over Corsenden Common.

It made delightful scandal, in the end; two such frantically talkable matches—Judith Heppelscott and that scapegrace Tom Swann; and—would you believe it?—Michael Barlow and a servant!

So that everybody was happy, as it turned out.

THE END

© *Clive Burnley, 1960*

Too many ghosts

continued from page 22

little girl, and about flowerstands that topple over for no reason at all, except that they have been kicked by a little foot with a long ruler attached to it."

"But your back was turned all the time," Noreen said. "I was watching you in the mirror." And then, realizing she had given herself away, she clapped both hands over her mouth, but immediately burst into a giggle.

"Noreen, do you know what a poltergeist is?"

"No," she replied, and almost immediately drew a long breath of contrition. "Oh, I'm sorry—I lied. Yes I do. I heard Mr. Jellicot speaking about them. He said that one had got into Miss Isobel's room and frightened her, so I thought I'd make one in Mummy's room. It's easy, isn't it?"

"I know," Hero said. "Noreen, did you help to make the noises last night? When the furniture fell over in Isobel's room and woke you up, were you out of bed as quick as a wink throwing something down the stairs?"

The child nodded, large-eyed.

"And, Noreen," Hero went on, "did you ever topsy-turvy Susan's room?"

"Oh no! I love Susan. I was ever so sorry about the the rabbit."

Hero said: "There's to be no more of that then, is there, Noreen?"

"All right, I promise," said Noreen.

LATER that afternoon, Hero had two not entirely pleasant interviews: one with Horace Spendley-Carter, M.P., and the other with Alfred Jellicot.

Spendley-Carter sought Hero out in his room, saying: "After last night's occurrences I have decided to notify the press. It is my duty to do so."

Hero, who had been studying his notes, looked up. "Yes," he said. "I see. Well, I suppose, then, there's nothing to be done."

"As a matter of fact I was just collecting the facts and considering the preparation of an article of my own—about the psychological factors encountered in poltergeist investigations."

"What?" roared Spendley-Carter. "By God, sir, you dare to write about me or my family and I'll sue you."

"It is a classical case of its kind," Hero said, unruffled. "Noreen is a smart, shrewd child. All of these poltergeist children are."

Spendley-Carter's moist eyes filled with hostility, rage and suspicion. "You haven't an iota of proof," he said.

"That's just it," Hero said. "I have. These." He opened a drawer and took out three photographs.

"Poltergeist child at work," Hero said. "You will note how Noreen is sitting facing the mirror where she can watch us and wait till she is certain no one is observing her, and then—whizz, the chicken sails through the air!"

Spendley-Carter stared at the prints with mounting horror. He said: "My God, man, if you print those I shall be ruined—utterly ruined."

"Yes," Hero said. "That will make my blackmailing just that much easier."

Something like hope came into Spendley-Carter's face, and he said: "How much do you want for them?"

Hero arose: "You are ruining a life, sir. Noreen's ambition and happiness are bound up with becoming a nursing sister. She is to be encouraged to do so from now on. Under those circumstances, there will be no publication on my part, and the poltergeist manifestations will cease."

Relief flooded Spendley-Carter's countenance. "What can I say?"

"Then it's agreed?"

"Yes."

Hero gathered up the snapshots and returned them to the drawer. He said: "Very well. Of course, you will likewise refrain from any communications with the press. You keep your end of it and I will keep mine, you need have no fears. Good day, sir. . . ."

The interview with little Jellicot was even more painful. It took place in Meg's room.

He said eagerly: "I hear you wished to have a word with me? Delighted, of

Answers to Everybody's Puzzling
See page 32

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

Find out what the total price would be if all the houses were the same price as No. 6, and divide by 11. This can be done by adding up the price differences between each house and house No. 6. With No. 5 it is £100; No. 4, £200; No. 3, £300; No. 2, £400; No. 1, £500. This makes a total difference of £1,500 on that side of No. 6; on the other side the difference will be half as much again—i.e. £2,250. Thus the sum of £3,750 added to £29,250 gives £33,000 as the total price of 11 houses the same as No. 6. Therefore No. 6 is priced at £3,000.

QUIZZLE

Quotation: Standing with reluctant feet where the brook and river meet. (Longfellow.)

Clue Down: Two heads are better than one. Clues Across: (A) Trisect; (B) Warrant; (C) Odium; (D) Hangar; (E) Eschew; (F) Antipathy; (G) Derelict; (H) Stucco; (I) Artesian; (J) Rotifer; (K) Emmet; (L) Bewitch; (M) Elver; (N) Turret; (O) Trachea; (P) Elba; (Q) Ramrod; (R) Troika; (S) Hassan; (T) Alder; (U) Naïve; (V) Otterburn; (W) Nimble; (X) Exeter.

continued from previous page

course. Any assistance I can render you, or advice. . . ."

Hero nodded. "Yes. I may require both. Would you be so good as to give us an account of your movements last night after you retired?"

The sudden dissolution of Alfred Jellicot was pathetic to behold.

"My movements?" he quavered. "Why, there weren't any. That is, I went to bed, and when I heard the harp, I—ah—naturally arose and joined you."

Meg had a feeling that something rather horrible was going to happen.

Hero said: "You are sure that at no time during the night you were present in the library."

Jellicot came further undone. "The library . . . ? N-no, of course not."

Hero's hand dropped to the side pocket of his jacket, and Meg suddenly cried: "No, no, Sandro, don't—don't."

Hero said: "I'm sorry, Meg, but I'm afraid we must." He dropped a photograph on the table in front of Jellicot.

The little man said: "Oh dear! Oh dear!" and then looked at them both in anguish. "It's me, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Hero gently enough, "I'm afraid it is. Would you care to tell us what you were doing there?"

JELLICOT looked up at him miserably, and said again: "Oh dear, oh dear! It's so—it's so *very* humiliating."

Meg burst out: "Then don't—please don't."

But the little man had brought himself to the point now. "You see," he said, "I am leaving here in a few days. . . . I collect—that is, I am fond of *some* innocent little souvenir that does no one any harm. I keep them in a book at home to show where I have been. . . . I wanted just a sheet of their own notepaper. It has the Paradine crest on it, you know. . . . I told a lie. I wasn't awakened by the noise, I heard it later." He paused abruptly, and then said: "Oh dear! I feel so very ridiculous," and began to cry.

It was too much for Meg. She went to him and put her arms about him and whispered: "Dear Mr. Jellicot, don't cry. It's quite all right. We do understand—lots of people enjoy souvenirs. Come, you mustn't." She turned fiercely upon her stepbrother: "Well, are you satisfied now?"

Hero felt miserable enough himself. He said: "I'm sorry, Meg. Look after the little man," and went out.

Feeling abject and distressed, he walked out of the Hall and strolled towards the stables

What had he accomplished? He'd turned up a couple of poltergeist tricks and phenomena. As for the rest, he had not succeeded in reducing the danger to Susan Marshall, or come any closer to solving the real haunting of Paradine Hall.

He sat on a mounting stone, fired his pipe and gave himself up to the gloomiest of self-criticism. There was a clatter of horse's hoofs, someone dismounted and another of the country club guests, Mrs. Geraldine Taylor, came striding up to him.

"Hallo, young man," she said. "You're in trouble, aren't you?"

Hero laughed. "Is it so apparent, then?"

Mrs. Taylor said: "Come along and talk to me, if you like. I've had a damn good ride, my head is clear and I'm going to have a drink."

Mrs. Taylor's room in the country club overlooked the park and the main drive. It was comfortably untidy.

"Well," she said, "so you've found out a few of the tricks that were being played here, but you still don't know who or why."

"That's about the crux of it," Hero said. "There's something naughty—or I suppose by now it would be safe to say 'someone'—loose here."

Mrs. Taylor was looking at him shrewdly. "Wouldn't it be possible for some*one* to become possessed by some*thing*?" she asked.

Hero replied: "I had thought of it."

Mrs. Taylor's next sentence came as a surprising switch. "Would you like me to try the Tarot?" she asked.

"I didn't know you dabbled in that," he said. Then he said, after reflection: "Yes, please, I think I would."

Mrs. Taylor got up, went to the desk and took out Tarot cards. Hero watched her shuffling deftly.

Hero asked: "Who taught you this?"

Mrs. Taylor shuffled the cards again and replied: "When I was at school in Switzerland, I had a girl friend who was a Rumanian. Her father was king of the gipsies, or something. She taught me. She believed in it implicitly."

She began to lay out the cards.

"You were not always fortunate as a child," she said at last. "I see difficulties from your seventh to your eleventh years. A friendship you formed with a boy of your own age at school has had a great influence in your life. I see a fair-haired girl, too. . . ."

Mrs. Taylor gabbled on.

Hero was disappointed. Mrs. Taylor's revelations had been no more than the usual fortune-teller's hit-or-miss gabble. The only item that had come at all close to truth was that of the boy with whom he had formed a friendship while at Eton. He thought for a moment of Alan Hunter, that tall, dark, brilliantly saturnine boy. He saw him now as he had seen him the last time, dead. He had lost his life while trying to rescue a friend from drowning. The scene on the bank of the river was as vivid as ever to him, and as painful.

"Greater love hath no man," said Mrs. Taylor.

"What?" said Hero sharply.

The solid woman looked up startled. "Did I say something?" she asked. "I was thinking. Your court cards are badly scrambled. You will suffer a financial loss, but gain a friend. . . ."

Mrs. Taylor was back at her gabble again, and yet Hero was aware of a curious sensation, as of the ground trembling beneath his feet. Without realizing it, she had read his thoughts.

He felt shaken and nervous. Would it happen again?

Suddenly Mrs. Taylor's voice slowed, then ran down and stopped. She said in a voice not at all like the one in which she had been speaking previously: "I feel ill. I feel very ill." And then, her voice sinking almost to a whisper: "There is great danger!"

There was presence then, presence enough to last Hero for a lifetime. He felt the room filled with it.

"That's wicked," said Mrs. Taylor, and then repeated the word *wicked* as though someone had spoken to her.

Hero fought off the nausea which was assailing him and asked: "What is wicked? Who is in danger?"

"Why, she is," said Mrs. Taylor. And then almost with an expression of surprise: "And so are you. Oh dear! I didn't know this. But why would anyone . . . ?" The expression of surprise then turned slowly to one of horror. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "but the other is far worse. It's her soul that is to be taken as well. Nothing is to be left to her. How dreadfully cruel!"

Mrs. Taylor's voice had changed to that of someone who was aghast at what she either saw or heard.

"What is the nature of the danger?" Hero whispered, hardly daring to speak.

"Jealousy and hatred," replied that other voice of Mrs. Geraldine Taylor. "Demoniacal hatred and death—and the holocaust of fire—flames at every window lighting the destruction of Paradine Hall." Then, as though there were someone else present to whom she was speaking, she shook her head and said: "But that's wicked—too horribly wicked! You *mustn't*—you'll forfeit your own soul—you'll be damned into eternity for ever after. Can't you see that you mustn't?"

"Mustn't what? Who?" Hero felt compelled to ask.

"What's that?" Mrs. Taylor said.

AND then, with a kind of automatism, her fingers began to pick up cards from the table. Whatever contact there had been was broken.

"I don't think I care to go on, if you don't mind," she said, in a voice that was now once more her own. "You don't really believe in it very much anyway, do you? I'm afraid it hasn't been very successful . . . would you care for another drink?"

With a wrench Hero could almost feel, the universe settled back into place again. He heard himself murmuring: "No, no—it was most interesting. No, thank you, I won't have another. I've taken up enough of your time. Thank you so much."

He got up and went to the door. He paused there for a moment. Mrs. Taylor was still at the table, watching him heavily as though she were trying to remember something. Then she said: "Be careful, young man."

Hero went out and walked down the corridor towards his room, where he could be alone and think. He knew that he was filled with a genuine fear.

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NEXT WEEK: The horror that struck at Hero . . .

CONTEMPT—4

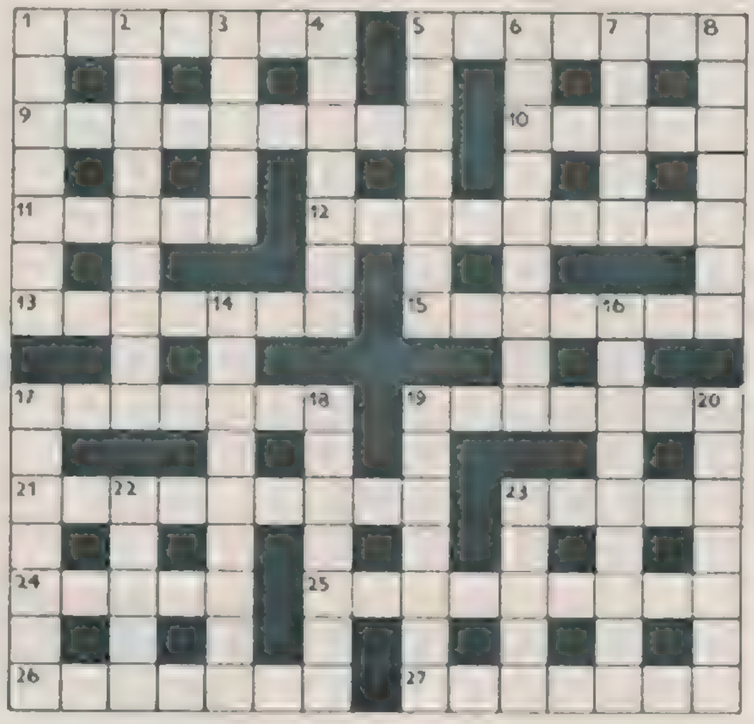
When you cannot get a thing, then is the time to have contempt for it.

Baltasar Gracian

EVERYBODY'S CROSSWORD (No. 10)

by Leslie Stokes

Prizes of one-guinea Book Tokens will be given for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries must be marked "Crossword No. 10" on the envelope and must be posted to reach this office (John Bull: Everybody's Weekly, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1) by Tuesday, January 19. No correspondence can be entered into about this puzzle.



ACROSS

1. Allowance from an oily man. (7)
5. Colourful proof the vehicle belongs to me. (7)
9. Destruction caused by moving coal south. (9)
10. Is such music child's play? (5)
11. Make a record. (5)
12. Old entertainer embarrassed by gold tiara. (9)
13. Change our name and inspire with love. (7)
15. Coy in a sty, to be precise. (7)
17. Remove bonds from a foreign dignitary and give him this. (7)
19. Way home for comb manufacturers. (3-4)
21. At which one may be prompted to have one's say. (9)
23. March as a body. (5)
24. Time to be in England, according to Browning. (5)
25. It grows on the Alps, found roughly S.W. leeside. (9)
26. Tried one's hand at composition? (7)
27. Birds belonging to the country, it seems. (7)

DOWN

1. He's strong enough to give the tale a twist. (7)
2. Comfortable on a sick bed, but not at home. (3, 2, 4)
3. Trophy for an outsize limousine. (5)
4. How ladies look upon beauty treatment? (7)
5. Weapon to wound a girl. (7)
6. Go to the country. (Sounds good advice for time-worn Kathleen.) (9)
7. "It is a tale told by an ——, . . ." (*Macbeth*) (5)
8. Gay reel and how one might change it. (7)
14. In justice, it isn't the great all-rounder in later life. (3, 6)
16. Fashion that put women through the hoop. (9)
17. Blast this hot place! (7)
18. Mad lies deceive. (7)
19. Epithet for the superlative coot? (7)
20. Shows former positions. (7)
22. Animals the sapper has around. (5)
23. Wrote differently. (5)

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD No. 7

ACROSS: 1, *Recording angel.* 9, *Flannel.* 10, *Savages.* 11, 12, *Self-indulgence.* 14, *Losing.* 15, *Jettison.* 17, *Schooner.* 18, *Corona.* 21, *Effrontery.* 22, *Onus.* 24, *Carrion.* 25, *Sustain.* 26, *Stainless steel.*
DOWN: 1, *Refusal.* 2, *Charles the First.* 3, *Rand.* 4, *Inland.* 5, *Gestures.* 6, *Navigation.* 7, *Egg-and-spoon race.* 8, *Astern.* 13, *Anno Domini.* 16, *Sentinel.* 17, *Speech.* 19, *Arsenal.* 20, *Crisis.* 23, *Isis.*

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD No. 8

ACROSS: 1, *Vegetarian.* 8, *Orchid.* 9, *Gorgonzola.* 10, *Herpes.* 11, *Boisterous.* 12, *Affair.* 13, *Spar.* 15, *Draught.* 19, *Skilled.* 22, *Eyes.* 23, *See red.* 25, *Gentlefolk.* 27, *Purple.* 28, *Huntingdon.* 29, *Albino.* 30, *Gate-legged.*
DOWN: 1, *Vagabond.* 2, *Garlic.* 3, *Trotting.* 4, *Razor.* 5, *Noah's Ark.* 6, *Scornful.* 7, *Live-wire.* 13, *Sty.* 14, *Ass.* 16, *Ruefully.* 17, *Unrepaid.* 18, *Hedgehog.* 20, *Internee.* 21, *Darkened.* 24, *Hot-dog.* 26, *Tithe.*

Winners to Crossword No. 6: Miss D. Hayward, Pennings, North Cerney, Cirencester; Mr. W. R. Cann, 3 Britannia Road, Surbiton, Surrey; Mrs. Vera Dawney, 52 Clanville Drive, Hornchurch, Essex. The winners to Crosswords Nos. 7 and 8 will be announced in our issues of January 23 and 30 respectively

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

"We're probably the only home in Britain with a *revolving* cat door"

Humble's box

continued from page 12

millimetre from it. I'll sign a statement and you can tear up your damned cheque."

Suddenly he became as excited as a schoolboy. "This is terrific of you, sir. You're a sportsman. Now, I've got it all worked out. . . ."

Young Fox continued to play me with an expert touch.

"I—er—well, what I've done on the off-chance that you'd accept my offer, is to hire a car for you, sir. We're only going as far as Seven Sisters Road. Tomorrow evening be any good?"

I said yes.

Master Fox, as solicitous as a nannie, collected me at the time appointed and ushered me into a very elegant motor. The chauffeur, I remember, even put a rug over my legs.

As we settled down and drove through the squalid streets of Camden Town, I made my final effort on behalf of my own self-respect.

"I've read your pamphlet," I said. "The box is nonsense, simply hocus-pocus for credulous nitwits as you very well know. Your suggested alterations simply turn the thing into a slightly less inferior series of barometers, all very inaccurate. I warn you I'm determined to say so, if I'm asked."

"That's perfect, sir," Fox said. "I'm only asking for a simple declaration."

We stopped at a doorway. Beside the entrance was a tarnished brass plate which bore a legend, *The Humble Society—Offices.*

Up the linoleum stairway the atmosphere cleared and I walked into a rather pleasant Victorian room on the first floor. There was a round table in the centre with a faded red cloth on it.

A large toad of a man with warts on his pouchy chops and thick pebble glasses greeted us wheezily. "My name is Porteous," he said, "I am the president of the Humble Society. This is my house. May I present Mr. James Entwhistle, our secretary, who is also our legal adviser."

I bowed to a dim and frigid man.

"This is my housekeeper, Mrs. Bond, who will witness any document we may wish to draw up. She will sign as the last remaining subscriber and member of the society."

We all sat down round the table and Mr. Porteous said: "This is an extraordinary meeting of the Humble Society established in 1794. All members are present and we have with us an expert of the Royal Meteorological Society.

"We are here to consider the work of Mr. Jeremy Fox, a respected student of meteorology, and in particular his treatise upon certain improvements to the Humble box. If we find it, upon advice, to be satisfactory, then this will conclude our business." He turned his rheumy eyes on me. "Now, sir. You have considered this young man's treatise. What have you to tell us?"

Before I could answer young Jeremy intervened. "I must explain to everyone," he said, "that the professor is a most reputable modernist. It follows from this, I'm sorry to say, that he is, so far as the society is concerned, an unbeliever. I have only asked him here to answer one simple question. I shall abide by his answer."

Young Jeremy placed a sheet of paper in front of me, typewritten in capital letters. "I hope this is fair, sir," he said. "I've tried to make it sound legal and Mr. Entwhistle here agrees that it's quite proper."

This is what it said: *I have read the treatise by Jeremy Fox relating to the apparatus known as Humble's box. I express no opinion whatsoever about the series of devices contained therein, but insofar as they relate in any way to meteorology as it is understood today then the amendments suggested in the said pamphlet will tend to improve the instrument. I am a Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society and a lecturer on that subject to the college.*

So far as it went, it was true. A small improvement could not be denied.

Mr. Entwhistle handed me a thin steel pen, ready inked. I was deep in the mystery now, too late for wriggling.

Exactly as I signed the paper, adding my credentials in full, Mr. Porteous passed me an envelope which clearly contained the fee I had so brashly spurned.

"Now, sir," he said. "This is in some

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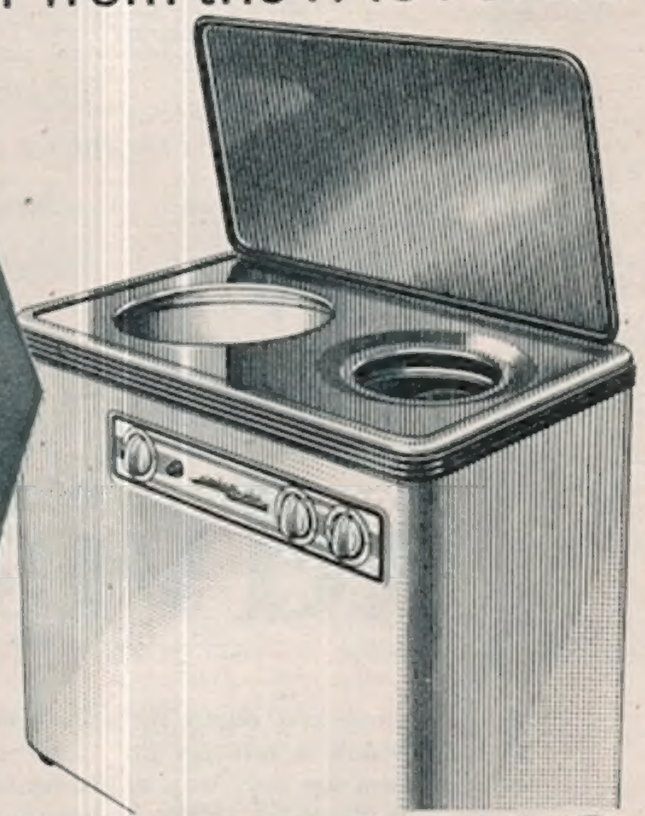

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We advise . . .

I WAS knocked down by a boy of thirteen riding a cycle in a lane which is not yet lit. I have since had sixteen stitches in my head and the only way to get rid of the scar is by plastic surgery, which will mean six weeks in hospital. Can I sue the boy through his father, or are the parish council responsible because they did not put lighting in the lane?—Mrs. H. M. P., Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks.

● In these unfortunate circumstances the parents of the child could not be held liable as he was not under their direct control at the time of the accident.

As the council had no special duty to provide lighting in the lane you could not succeed in any claim for damages against them.

COLLARED

IN October I sent a fur collar to a laundry to be cleaned. It has been lost, says the manager. Can I claim its value, or another collar?—Mrs. H. H., Greenock, Renfrewshire.

● Cleaners usually accept articles at "owner's risk only" and the conditions are generally stated on the receipt ticket. If your fur collar was accepted under such conditions you could only claim such compensation as is stated in them.

If, however, the article was accepted unconditionally and has been lost through the cleaner's negligence, he can be held liable for its value.

TAKEN FOR A SPIN

ABOUT four months ago I had a demonstration at home of a spin drier. The representative persuaded me to keep it and I signed an H.P. form, with a £4 deposit. The understanding was that I had it on approval and could return it if I did not like it. After two weeks I asked the firm to take it back. Eventually they did so, but they refuse to pay back the £4. Now they won't even answer my letters. Am I entitled to my money back?—R. D. D., Yardley, Birmingham.

● As you signed the hire-purchase agreement you would be presumed to have read and understood it.

It is unlikely that the agent's verbal statement would have any legal significance. If, therefore, the vendors are willing to release you from the agreement they could retain your deposit as compensation for their loss of profit.

AM I STUNG TWICE?

I HOLD forty trust-units in a trust corporation and have received last year's dividend warrants with income tax already deducted. As I already pay standard rate income tax I wonder how I can reclaim this extra amount?—Miss P. A. T., Leeds, 9, Yorks.

● The tax which was deducted at source is properly payable by you as you are already liable to pay tax at the full standard rate. It cannot be reclaimed.

TAX FOR MY WIFE

MY wife and I are both over sixty-five and both get a pension, my wife 30s. and myself £2 10s. When I am working I do not draw my pension, but my wife still has hers. Must I pay tax on my wife's pension?—G. C. M., North Cheam, Surrey.

● Your wife's part of the pension is taxable because it is not her earned income, but is paid because of your contributions.

HEADING NORTH

WHERE can I obtain information on buying a croft in the Orkneys?—F. E., Wix, Essex.

● You should get in touch with the Crofters' Commission, 9 Ardross Terrace, Inverness, and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh, 1. Explain the kind of croft you have in mind.

CAN WE ACT?

MY sister and I are both beneficiaries under my father's estate, and we want to know if we can act as trustees under the Land Settlement Act, 1925. One of the trustees has died, the other is my mother who is ninety-eight.—W. C. G., Margate, Kent.

● Your mother can relinquish her trusteeship in favour of you and your sister, by executing a Deed of Appointment, which must be drafted by a solicitor.

THE CLASSY TOUCH

ACCORDING to my genealogical tree I have a right to armorial bearings. I would like to use this on notepaper headings and would like to find out where I can obtain a stamp for this?—J. C. W., Gilwern, Mon.

● Family arms have been and are still granted by letters of patent from the Kings of Arms under authority delegated to them by the crown in the fifteenth century.

A right to arms can only be established by registration in the official records of the College of Arms of a pedigree showing direct male line descent from an ancestor already registered as entitled to arms, or by making an application to the college for a grant of arms. The college's address is Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4.

LAMP WITHOUT MAGIC

TO light up my garage I bought a second-hand eighty-watt fluorescent unit. When cold the unit will not light properly. It flashes unless I run a lighted match or cigarette lighter along the tube. This also happens with a new unit. What is the reason?—S. K., Derby.

● This is a common problem in cold or damp conditions. You should make sure there is effective earthing, and then, if necessary, fix an earthed wire or rod close along the top of the lamp. If this doesn't work, buy a lamp with a silicone coating or a metal strip already fixed.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

▶ **Protective finger-plate:** Prevent the paint or wallpaper round your light switch from becoming finger-marked, by fitting a Lesta switch finger-plate. Made of transparent polystyrene and measuring about 5½ in. square, the plate has a decorative ridged effect. To fit one, slacken the switch plate screws, twist in the Lesta at an angle until it lies slightly behind the plate, then retighten the screws. These plates can only be fitted to square flush switches.

These plates cost 1s. each from a retailer or can be supplied by post from the manufacturers at 5s. for four plates. By Harper, Lee & Co., Ltd., 31 Church Street, Edmonton, N.9.

▶ **Vegetable peeler:** How quickly can you peel 2 lb. of root vegetables by hand? My guess is 10 minutes. But you can do it in a fifth of the time by using a Duchess Watermatic peeler, attached to the cold-water tap by a length of hose. Water pressure turns an abrasive base, which whirls the vegetables against the abrasive sides of the peeler, removing the peel and washing it away.

A transparent lid lets you see when the vegetables are done. Available from leading hardware stores and shops, price 79s. 6d. Distributed by Lexington Products, Ltd., 86-88 Queensbury Road, Wembley, Middx.

▶ **New laminated plastic designs:** Sixteen new patterns have been added to the Warerite range of laminated plastics for 1960. These include dainty, small-scale floral patterns which would be happy in a feminine bedroom or nursery, interesting texture effects and bold abstract designs in rich colour. Most of the new designs are available in sheets measuring 9 ft. by 4 ft.

These are available to the public only through recognized specialists in Warerite, who sell it only when already bonded to materials such as plywood or blockboard, and prefabricated to shape and size.

Sold in this form, the handyman can rest assured that the actual bonding of the Warerite has been carried out under factory conditions. The retail prices range from 7s. per square foot according to backing. By Bakelite, Ltd.

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continued from previous page

respects a melancholy occasion. You are entitled to an explanation and I make it after very considerable forethought, for this may prove to be the final meeting of our society."

He pulled his glasses forward on his nose and studied some notes.

"The Humble Society was founded in 1794 by supporters of Josiah Humble of Clerkenwell, subsequent upon certain scurrilous attacks upon him.

"In that year his many admirers rallied to his defence under the chairmanship of Lord Redcar, a nobleman much given to the championing of forlorn causes. He was supported by Lord Dinwiddie, Mr. Ephraim Bamforth, the Honourable George Merryweather and several other philanthropic enthusiasts.

"These gentlemen subscribed certain modest sums for an association under the name 'The Union for the Furtherance of the Scientific Principles of Josiah Humble,' a title changed in 1862 to 'The Humble Society.' Its object has remained the same. It is to promote the good name of The Box and to improve it by grant of cash where that is shown to be possible."

He paused and tweaked his nose as if he were taking snuff. "Our husbandry has not been negligible," he went on. "Indeed, every investment we have made of the original capital in our trust has been highly profitable. Yet we have never been able to achieve our object.

"One must recall regretfully that changing fashions in philosophy and science and Humble's death from apoplexy in 1796 have driven our little group into almost total obscurity. What has remained to us is our solemn duty to our founders.

"At last, at very long last, so to speak, a suitable candidate has come forward properly qualified to make a claim on us. The acceptance of that claim will enable the society to fulfil its single duty and to consider its usefulness at an honourable end. Can you confirm this, Mr. Entwhistle?"

The solicitor answered in a rumbling tone as if his voice were recorded far back in his throat. "Your statement is perfectly accurate, Mr. Porteous," he said. "The funds of the society have always been held in trust for the improvement of the device. There has never before been a claimant. Now we have one in the shape of Mr. Jeremy Fox, whose treatise is by expert testimony precisely what we have been charged to find. A grant quite properly authorized by the president and agreed to by the surviving member and the secretary—a legal quorum—will enable us to close our books and to disband this archaic and, if I may say so, hitherto utterly useless body, for good and all. I hope I make myself clear?"

No one replied and finally Mr. Porteous rose slowly to his feet. There was a certain dignity about him.

"Mr. Fox," he said. "It is my duty to hand into your keeping the sum we have held in trust for one hundred and sixty-five years. Your claim is perfectly in order and I must congratulate you upon your industry, your devotion and your scholarship. The Humble Society is proud of its choice."

With that he made a formal bow to the wretched boy, passed him an envelope and sat down heavily. For once in his life young Jeremy found himself without a suitable response.

In the funeral motor car on our way back to the West End he sat next to me in silence for half the journey. Then he opened the envelope and held out the cheque in front of me, still without comment.

The bright lights of a cinema illuminated its amiable pink face. It was made out to Jeremy Fox, Esquire, for the sum of thirty-four thousand pounds seven shillings and tenpence.

I looked at him over my glasses and he returned my stare. The fish had been landed.

"Well, I understand it all now," I said at last.

"I'm so glad about that, sir," he said. "You were a tremendous help and I feel you honestly do deserve to be right in the picture.

"Let me give you the last detail. Old Porteous is my maternal uncle . . . a very wise and astute sort of chap, sir, in his unscientific way." THE END

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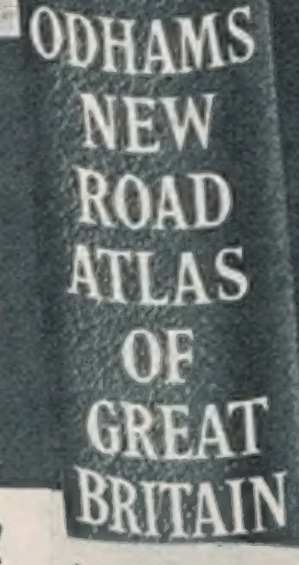

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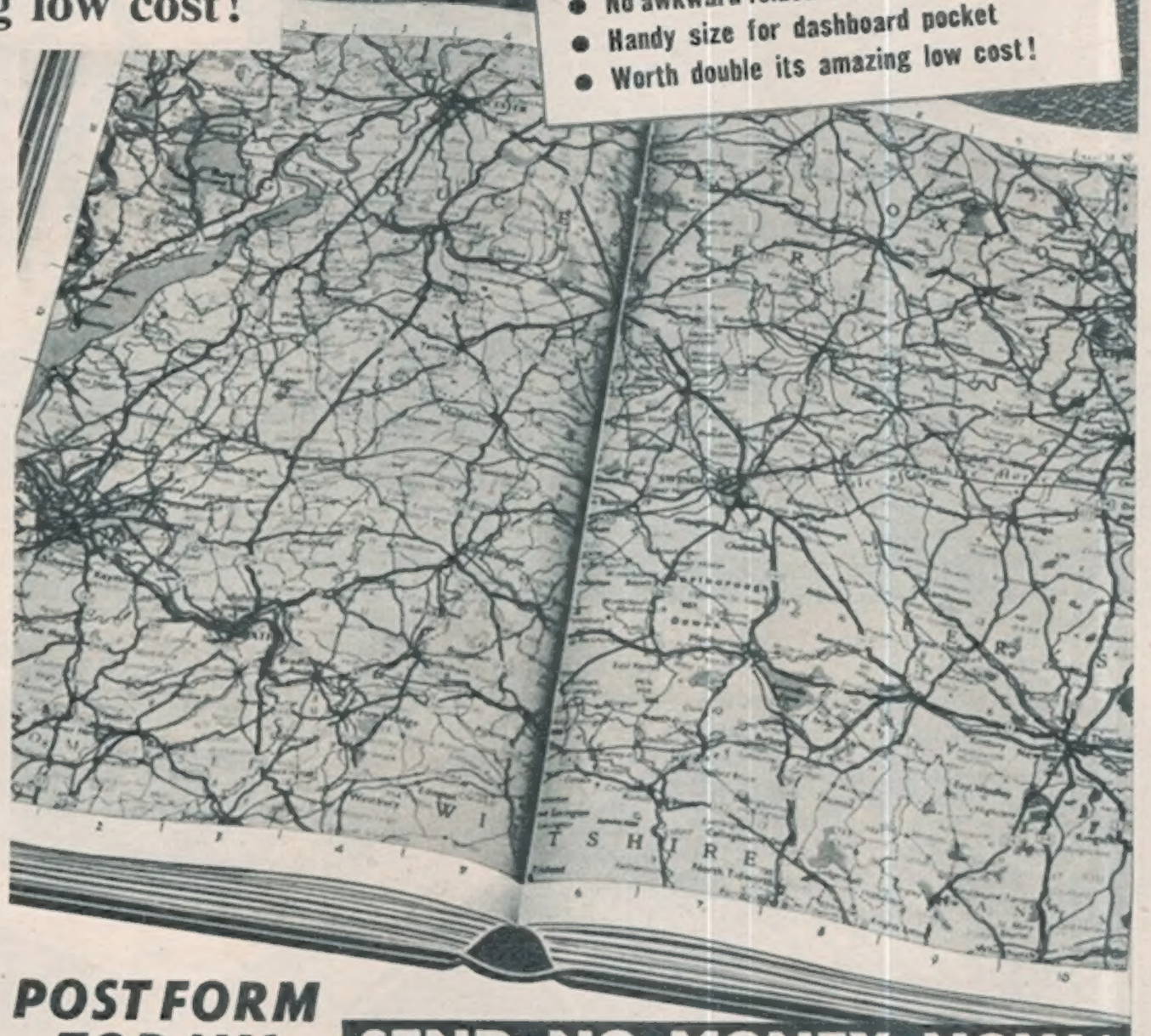

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